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News

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EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST -- DECEMBER 1995

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation of private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.9 percent over the year ended December 1995, reported John L. Wieting, Regional Commissioner for the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Wieting noted that the 12-month increase for the region was just above the 2.7 percent rise in September -- the smallest since the series began in December 1982. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.7 percent over the 12-month period ended December 1995 -- 0.2 percentage point less than the increase in compensation costs and 0.1 percentage point below the 2.8 percent increase in wages and salaries for the region. The ECI for compensation in the Northeast was up 0.4 percent since September, the smallest increase among the four Census regions. (See table A.)

Table A. Percent change in ECI for compensation[1] and for wages and salaries, private industry workers[2], United States and regions, not seasonally adjusted

	Percent changes for 3 months ended			Percent changes for 12 months ended		
Region	June 1995	Sept. 1995	Dec. 1995	June 1995	Sept. 1995	Dec. 1995
Compensation:						
United States	0.7	0.6	0.6	2.8	2.6	2.8
Northeast	0.8	0.6	0.4	3.1	2.7	2.9
South	0.5	0.7	0.6	2.9	2.8	2.9
Midwest	0.9	0.6	0.5	2.7	2.5	2.7
West	0.7	0.4	1.0	2.4	2.1	2.8
Wages and salaries only:						
United States	0.7	0.7	0.6	2.9	2.8	2.8
Northeast	0.7	0.8	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8
South	0.7	0.8	0.6	2.9	2.8	2.9
Midwest	1.1	0.7	0.4	3.3	2.9	2.8
West	0.8	0.4	1.1	2.5	2.8	3.1

[1]The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The latest 12-month advance in compensation for private industry workers in the Northeast continued a nearly 4-year period of moderation during which increases ranged between 2.7 and 4.1 percent; in the last 2 years the rate has not topped 3.3 percent. From 1988 through 1991, increases in compensation costs were substantially higher, ranging from 4.5 to 7.2 percent. The 2.8 percent December-to-December rise for the United States -- followed a 2.6 percent rise

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that was the smallest 12-month increase in the over 12-year history of the series -- nearly matched that for the Northeast. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast have been relatively comparable since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. The slowdown in the rate of increase was not limited to the Northeast however; the most recent increases in the Midwest (2.7 percent), West (2.8 percent), and South (2.9 percent) were among the lowest of those posted during the last 8 years in those regions. (See table 1 and chart 1.)

Components of Compensation Costs

In the U.S., wages and salaries went up 2.8 percent and benefit costs increased 2.7 percent in December 1994-95 as a reversal in the trend of decelerating health insurance costs, as well as gains in nonproduction bonuses, contributed to a faster rate of benefit costs increases. The previous over-the-year rise (2.1 percent) was the smallest since the series began in 1980 and reflected the moderation in benefit costs gains, down from 7.2 percent in March 1989-90.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-95

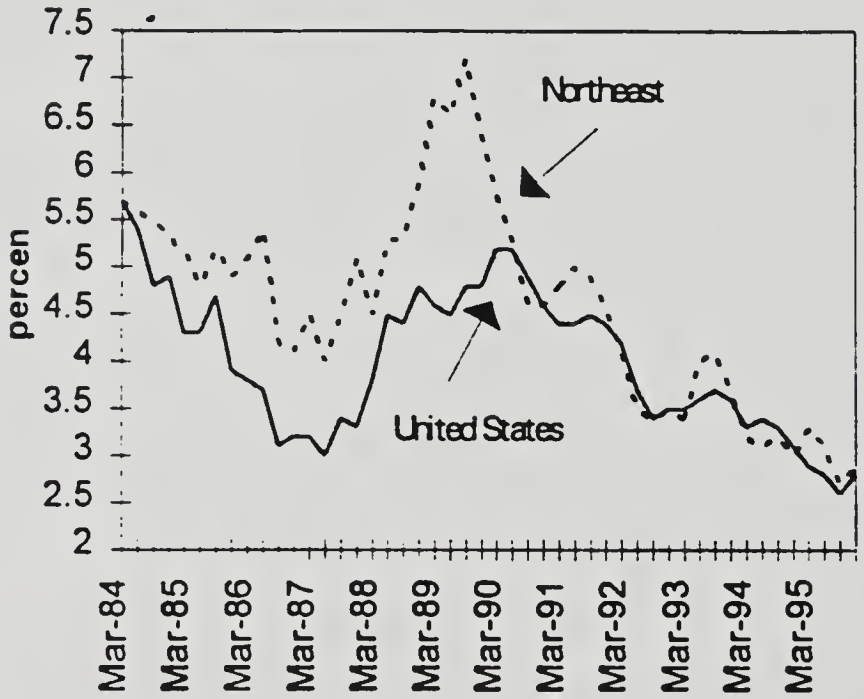
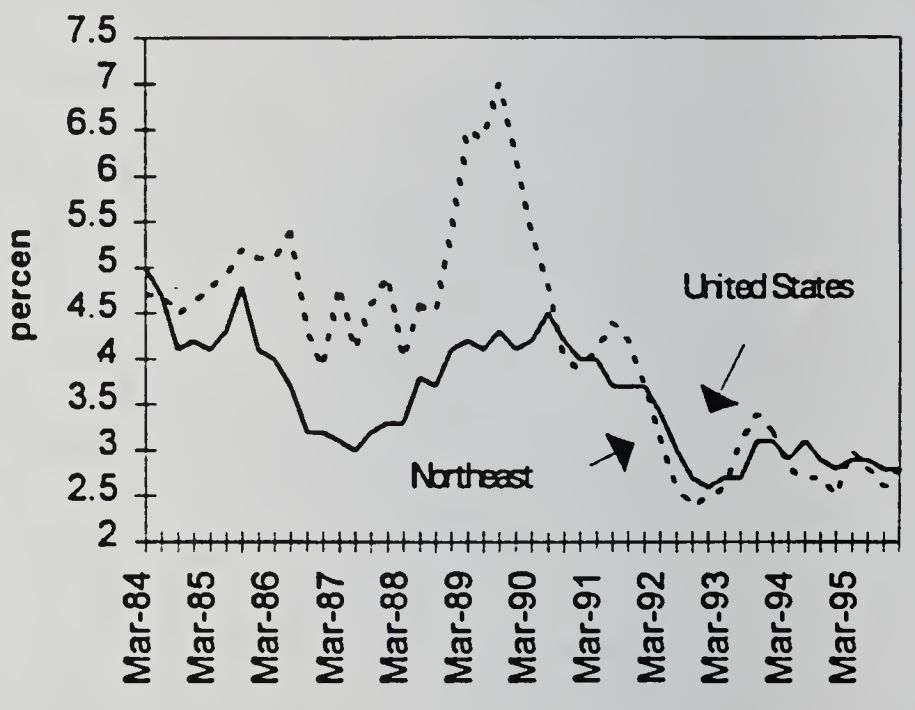


Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-95



In the Northeast, wages and salaries increased 0.4 percent since September and were 2.8 percent higher over the year. (See table 2 and chart 2.) For both September and December, the 12-month rise in wages and salaries was just 0.1 percent below the same over-the-year increase in total compensation; the last time these numbers were so close was more than 7 years before. In the intervening period, wages did not increase as fast as total compensation, reflecting much more rapid benefit increases.

All of the regions had about the same 12-month advance in wages and salaries ranging from 2.8 to 3.1 percent. The wages and salaries index for the Northeast has increased at a comparatively moderate rate since June 1990, near the start of the national recession. Since then the wages and salaries index increased 17.9 percent, about the same as the United States. During the comparable period from December 1984, the wages and salaries index for the Northeast rose 30.7 percent compared with 23.2 percent for the U.S. Increases in the remaining regions were more moderate in the later period as well, but were much closer to those of 1984-90.

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last 3 months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.9 percent, somewhat higher than the 3-month rates of the last year. In December, the increase for wages and salaries was 0.7 percent and for benefits, 1.3 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in

wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, New York, New York, 10014.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1984-95, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1984-March	81.5	76.5	83.1	83.2	83.5	1.7	1.2	2.2	2.2	0.8	5.7	5.7	6.4	5.7	4.9
-June	82.2	77.6	83.8	83.7	84.3	0.9	1.4	0.8	0.6	1.0	5.4	5.6	6.3	4.9	4.7
-September	82.9	78.7	83.8	85.0	84.5	0.9	1.4	0.0	1.6	0.2	4.8	5.5	4.5	5.2	3.8
-December	84.0	79.6	84.8	85.7	86.2	1.3	1.1	1.2	0.8	2.0	4.9	5.3	4.3	5.3	4.1
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.9	127.9	126.0	128.4	125.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	1.0	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.8

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1984-95, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1984-March	82.4	77.2	84.2	84.4	84.4	1.2	0.7	1.9	1.7	0.2	5.0	4.7	5.8	5.0	4.1
-June	83.1	78.2	85.0	84.7	85.0	0.8	1.3	1.0	0.4	0.7	4.7	4.7	5.7	4.1	4.0
-September	83.8	79.3	85.0	86.0	85.3	0.8	1.4	0.0	1.5	0.4	4.1	4.5	4.2	4.4	3.0
-December	84.8	80.2	85.9	86.7	87.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.8	2.1	4.2	4.6	4.0	4.5	3.4
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.5	123.5	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8	3.1

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

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United States Department of Labor

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FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, MAY 9, 1996
9:00 A.M. (E.D.T)

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST -- MARCH 1996

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation of private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.7 percent over the year ended March 1996, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the 12-month increase for the region was the same as the 2.7 percent rise in September -- the smallest since the series began in December 1982. The ECI for compensation in the Northeast was up 0.9 percent since December, lower than all regional changes but the Midwest (0.6 percent). (See table A.)

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 3.0 percent over the 12-month period ended March -- 0.3 percentage point more than the increase in compensation costs but the same as the 3.0 percent increase in wages and salaries for the region. For the last three years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI; the 3-year increase in the CPI-U was 7.9 percent compared with 9.0 percent for wages and salaries.

Table A. Percent change in ECI for compensation[1] and for wages and salaries, private industry workers[2] by region, not seasonally adjusted

	Percent changes for 3 months ended			Percent changes for 12 months ended		
Region	Sept. 1995	Dec. 1995	Mar. 1996	Sept. 1995	Dec. 1995	Mar. 1996
Compensation:						
United States	0.6	0.6	1.0	2.6	2.8	3.0
Northeast	0.6	0.4	0.9	2.7	2.9	2.7
South	0.7	0.6	1.2	2.8	2.9	3.1
Midwest	0.6	0.5	0.6	2.5	2.7	2.7
West	0.4	1.0	1.2	2.1	2.8	3.3
Wages and salaries only:						
United States	0.7	0.6	1.2	2.8	2.8	3.3
Northeast	0.8	0.4	1.1	2.6	2.8	3.0
South	0.8	0.6	1.5	2.8	2.9	3.6
Midwest	0.7	0.4	1.1	2.9	2.8	3.3
West	0.4	1.1	1.0	2.8	3.1	3.3

[1]The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The latest 12-month advance in compensation for private industry workers in the Northeast continued a 4-year period of moderation during which increases ranged between 2.7 and 4.1 percent; in the last 2 years the rate has not topped 3.3 percent. From 1988 through 1991, increases in compensation costs were substantially

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higher, ranging from 4.5 to 7.2 percent. The 3.0 percent March-to-March rise for the whole United States was higher than that for the Northeast for the first time since the end of 1994. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast have been relatively comparable since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. The slowdown in the rate of increase was not limited to the Northeast; however, the most recent increases in the Midwest (2.7 percent), South (3.1 percent), and West (3.3 percent), were in line with the increases of the past year or, in the case of the West, somewhat above them. (See table 1 and chart 1.)

Components of Compensation Costs

In the U.S., wages and salaries of private industry workers went up 3.3 percent and benefit costs increased 2.0 percent in March 1995-96 reflecting a slowdown in nonproduction bonuses, health benefits, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation costs. This was the smallest over-the-year increase since the series started in 1980 and reflected the moderation in benefit costs gains, down from a peak of 7.2 percent in March 1989-90.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-96

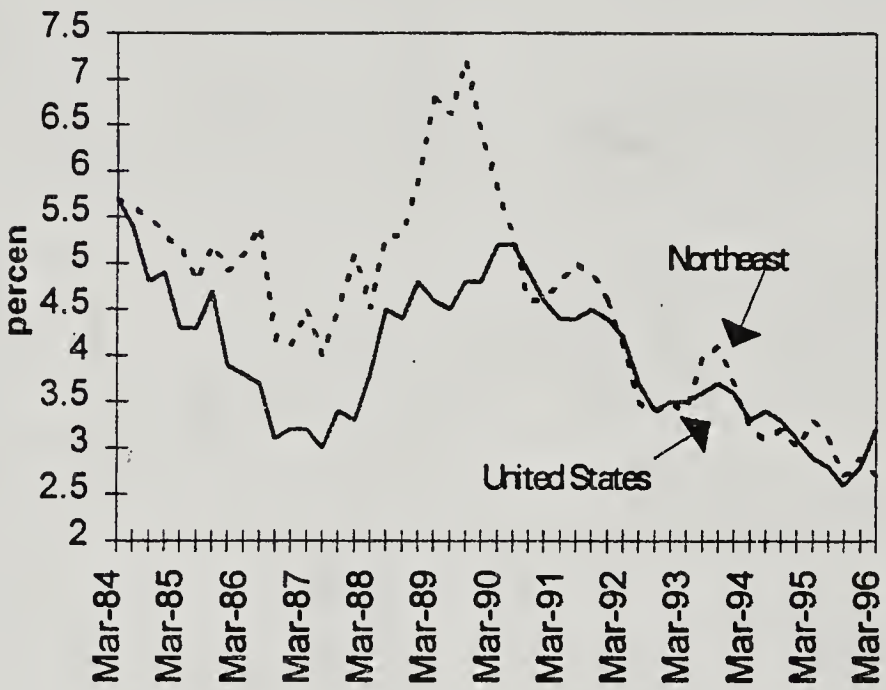
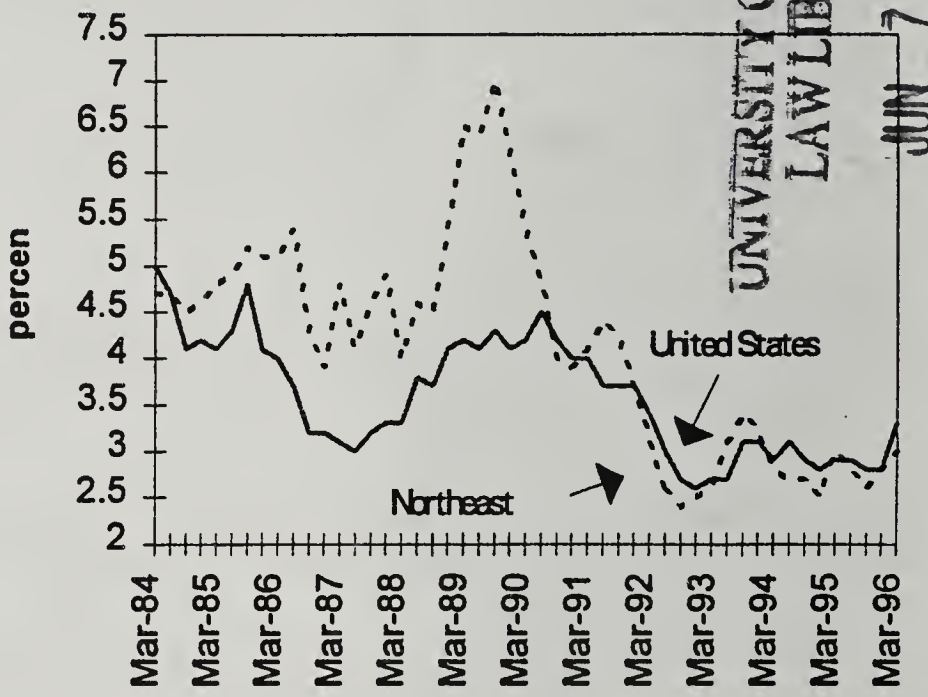


Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-96



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In March wages and salaries rose faster than total compensation in the Northeast, indicating a drop in the cost of benefits. For both September and December, the 12-month rise in wages and salaries was just 0.1 percent below the same over-the-year increase in total compensation; the last time these numbers were so close was more than 7 years before. In the intervening period, wages did not increase as fast as total compensation, reflecting much more rapid benefit increases. (See table 2 and chart 2.)

All of the regions had about the same 12-month advance in wages and salaries ranging from 3.0 percent in the Northeast to 3.3 percent in the Midwest and West and 3.6 percent in the South; each of the four rates were higher than the preceding rate. The wages and salaries index for the Northeast has generally increased at a more moderate rate during the last 5 years than in the previous 5 years. Since June 1990, near the start of the national recession, the wages and salaries index increased 19.2 percent, the same as the U.S. The Midwest was the highest region at 20.4 percent while the South was lowest at 18.2 percent. During the comparable period prior to mid 1990, the increase for the Northeast was 32.2 percent, substantially higher than that of the U.S., 24.7 percent. (See table 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last 3 months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.7 percent, about the same as the rates since September 1993 (0.6 to 0.8 percent); the source of the increase was quite different, however. The wages and salaries index increase was 1.1 percent -- the largest since June 1990 -- while benefits costs fell 0.2 percent -- the first decline in the over 15 year history of the series.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Romm 808, New York, New York 10014.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.9	127.9	126.0	128.4	125.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	1.0	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.8
1996-March	128.2	129.0	127.5	129.2	126.6	1.0	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.2	3.0	2.7	3.1	2.7	3.3

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.5	123.5	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.8	3.1
1996-March	124.6	124.9	124.3	124.9	123.9	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.1	1.0	3.3	3.0	3.6	3.3	3.3

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1991-95 were revised to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request.

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EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST -- SEPTEMBER 1996

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.5 percent over the year ended September 1996, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the 12-month increase for the region remained within a narrow range of 2.4 to 2.8 percent since September 1995 -- these were the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, up 3.2 percent, rose faster than total compensation indicating continued moderation in the cost of benefits. Along with June, September's increase was the largest 12-month increase since December 1993. (See table A.)

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.9 percent since last September -- 0.4 percentage point more than the increase in compensation costs but 0.3 percentage point below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 3 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI; the 3-year increase in the CPI-U was 8.4 percent compared with 8.7 percent for the ECI for wages and salaries.

Table A. Percent change in ECI for compensation[1] and for wages and salaries, private industry workers[2] by region, not seasonally adjusted

	Percent changes for					
	3 months ended			12 months ended		
Region	Mar. 1996	June 1996	Sept. 1996	Mar. 1996	June 1996	Sept. 1996
Compensation:						
United States	0.9	0.9	0.6	2.7	2.9	2.9
Northeast	0.9	0.6	0.7	2.6	2.4	2.5
South	1.1	0.6	0.8	2.7	2.8	2.9
Midwest	0.9	0.9	0.5	2.9	3.0	2.8
West	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.7	3.2	3.6
Wages and salaries only:						
United States	1.1	1.0	0.7	3.2	3.4	3.3
Northeast	1.1	0.9	0.8	3.0	3.2	3.2
South	1.4	0.8	0.7	3.4	3.6	3.4
Midwest	1.2	0.9	0.6	3.5	3.3	3.2
West	0.5	1.2	0.8	2.8	3.2	3.6

[1]The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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Trends in Compensation Costs

The over-the-year increase in compensation in the Northeast remained lower than the rate for the United States as a whole. The U.S. rate has remained in a very narrow band since 1995, ranging from 2.6 to 2.9 percent; in contrast, the Northeast had increases above the national average in 1995, starting with 3.3 percent in March, but the rate of increase slowed until, in 1996, each has been lower than the comparable U.S. rate. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. Before that, the pace of increase in the Northeast routinely exceeded that of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 1.)

The protracted slowdown in the rate of increase was limited to the Northeast. The most recent rise in the Midwest (2.8 percent) was in line with increases of the past year and in the South (2.9 percent) and West (3.6 percent), the increases were somewhat above those of the recent past.

Components of Compensation Costs

The 12-month rise in wages and salaries was 0.7 percentage points above the over-the-year increase in total compensation. Every period this year had a faster rate of increase in wages and salaries than in compensation, ending 8 years where more rapidly rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading by about a year. In the U.S., benefit costs increased 1.8 percent in September 95-96.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-96

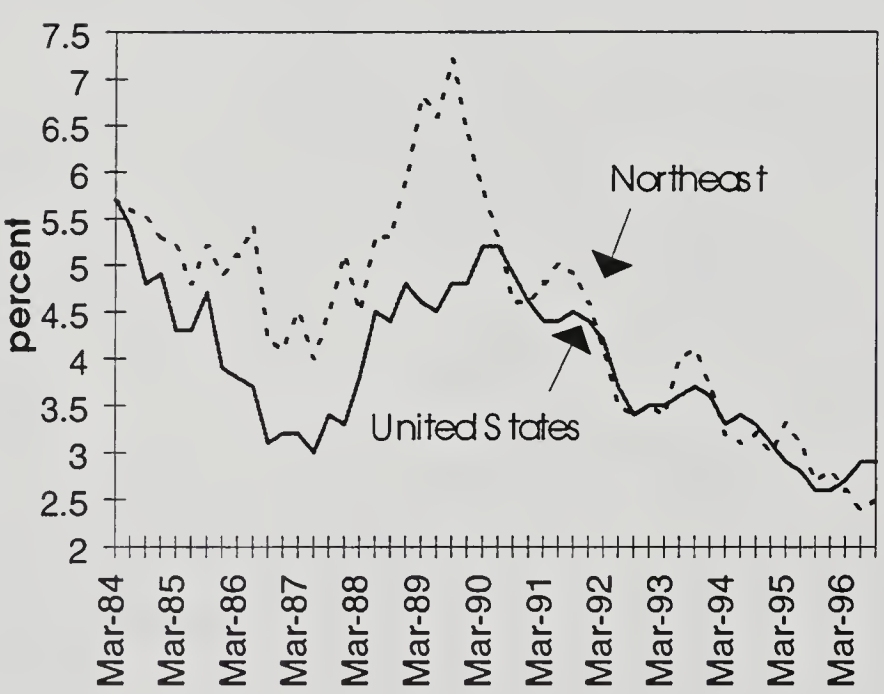
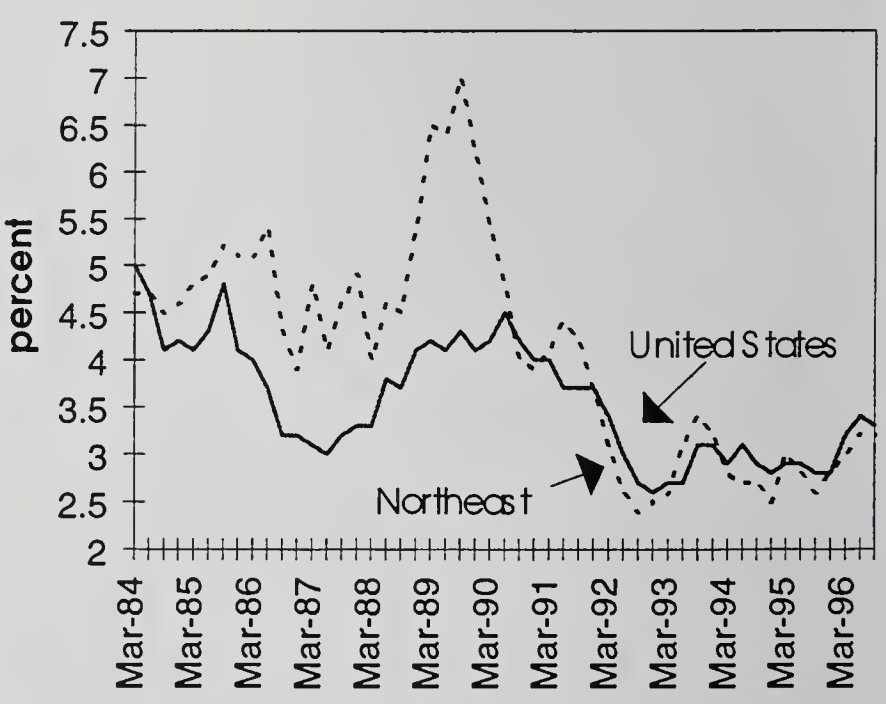


Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1984-96



All of the regions had about the same 12-month advance in wages and salaries ranging from 3.2 percent in the Northeast and Midwest to 3.4 percent in the South and 3.6 percent in the West; the same range as in June. Only in the West did the pace of increase accelerate.

The wages and salaries index for the Northeast has generally increased at a more moderate rate during the last 6 years than in the previous 6 years. Since June 1990, near the start of the national recession, the wages and salaries index increased 21.2 percent, almost exactly the same as the U.S. Over the same period, the Midwest had the fastest rate of increase, 22.4 while the South was lowest at 19.8 percent. During the comparable period prior to mid 1990, the increase for the Northeast was 35.8 percent, substantially higher than that of the U.S., 26.8 percent. (See table 2 and chart 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last 3 months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.6 percent, about the same as the rates since September 1993 (0.6 to 0.8 percent). Wages and salaries and benefits costs increased 0.6 and 0.7 percent, respectively.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1991-95 were revised to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request.

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FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST -- DECEMBER 1996

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.6 percent over the year ended December 1996, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the 12-month increase for the region remained within a narrow range of 2.4 to 2.8 percent since September 1995 -- these were the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, up 3.3 percent, rose faster than total compensation indicating continued moderation in the cost of benefits. (See table A.) This was the largest 12-month increase in wages and salaries since September 1993.

Table A. Percent change in ECI for compensation[1] and for wages and salaries, private industry workers[2] by region, not seasonally adjusted

	Percent changes for 3 months ended			Percent changes for 12 months ended		
Region	June 1996	Sept. 1996	Dec. 1996	June 1996	Sept. 1996	Dec. 1996
Compensation:						
United States	0.9	0.6	0.6	2.9	2.9	3.1
Northeast	0.6	0.7	0.4	2.4	2.5	2.6
South	0.6	0.8	0.7	2.8	2.9	3.3
Midwest	0.9	0.5	0.6	3.0	2.8	3.0
West	1.1	0.8	0.5	3.2	3.6	3.1
Wages and salaries only:						
United States	1.0	0.7	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.4
Northeast	0.9	0.8	0.6	3.2	3.2	3.3
South	0.8	0.7	0.8	3.6	3.4	3.8
Midwest	0.9	0.6	0.6	3.3	3.2	3.3
West	1.2	0.8	0.6	3.2	3.6	3.1

[1]The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 3.2 percent since last December -- 0.6 percentage point more than the increase in compensation costs but 0.1 percentage point below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 3 1/2 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased slightly less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since June 1993 was 9.5 percent compared with 10.4 percent for the ECI for wages and salaries. (See chart 1.)

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Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation has remained in a very narrow band since 1995, ranging from 2.6 to 3.1 percent; in contrast, the Northeast had increases above the national average in 1995 but the rate of increase slowed. The over-the-year increase in compensation in the Northeast remained lower than the rate for the United States as a whole during all of 1996. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. Before that, the pace of increase in the Northeast routinely exceeded that of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

The protracted slowdown in the rate of increase was limited to the Northeast. The most recent increases in the Midwest (3.0 percent) and West (3.1 percent) were higher than those of 1995 and in line with those of the past year. The 3.3 percent increase in the South was somewhat above those of the last 2 years.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percentage change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the Northeast, 1990-96

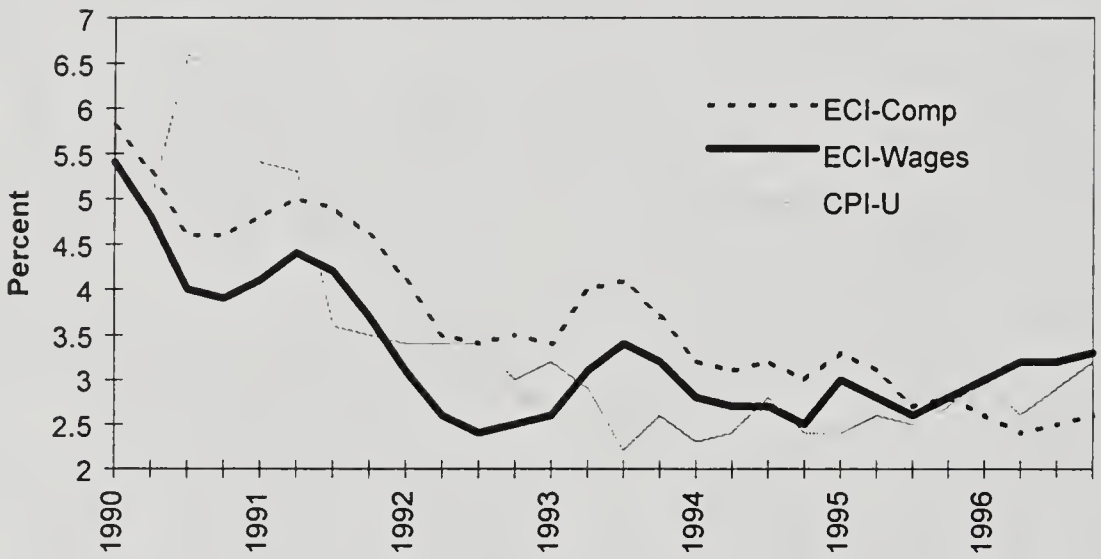
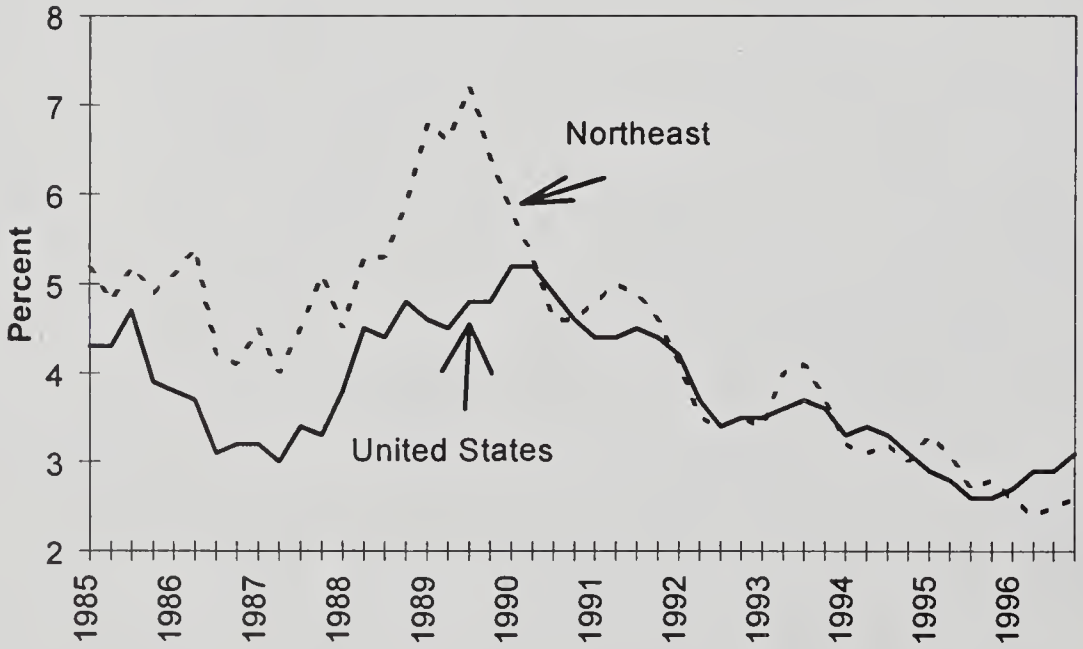


Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-96



Components of Compensation Costs

The 12-month rise in wages and salaries was 0.7 percentage point above the over-the-year increase in total compensation. Every period this year had a faster rate of in-crease in wages and salaries than in compensation, ending 8 years where more rapidly rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading by about a year. In the U.S., benefit costs in-creased 2.0 percent in Decem-ber 95-96.

In both total compensation and wages and salaries, the difference between the lowest and highest 12-month increase was 0.7 percentage point. The smallest rise in compensation costs was 2.6 percent in the Northeast followed by 3.0 percent in the Midwest, 3.1 percent in the West, and 3.3 percent in the South. The 12-month advance in wages and salaries ranged from 3.1 percent in the West to 3.3 percent in both the Northeast and Midwest to 3.8 percent in the South. Only in the West did the pace of increase in both compensation and wages and salaries slow following September increases that were the highest of the last 4 years.

The wages and salaries index for the Northeast has generally increased at a more moderate rate during the last 6 1/2 years than in the previous 6 1/2 years. Since June 1990, near the start of the national recession, the wages and salaries index increased 21.9 percent, almost exactly the same as the U.S. Over the same period, the Midwest had the fastest rate of increase, 23.1 while the South was lowest at 20.7 percent. During the comparable period prior to mid-1990, the increase for the Northeast was 36.6 percent, substantially higher than that of the U.S., 28.4 percent. (See table 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last 3 months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.8 percent, about the same as the rates since September 1993 (0.6 to 0.8 percent). Wages and salaries and benefits costs each increased 0.7 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.
[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-96, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1991-95 were revised to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request.

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FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – JUNE 1997

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.6 percent over the year ended June 1997, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the 12-month increase for the region remained within a narrow range of 2.4 to 2.8 percent since September 1995 -- these were the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, up 3.0 percent over the year, rose faster than total compensation indicating continued moderation in the cost of benefits. (See table A.) This was the 6th consecutive quarter in which the United States had a higher 12-month increase in wages and salaries than the Northeast.

Table A. Percent change in ECI for compensation[1] and for wages and salaries, private industry workers[2] by region, not seasonally adjusted

	Percent changes for					
	3 months ended			12 months ended		
Region	Dec. 1996	Mar. 1997	June 1997	Dec. 1996	Mar. 1997	June 1997
Compensation:						
United States	0.6	0.8	0.8	3.1	3.0	2.9
Northeast	0.4	0.8	0.7	2.6	2.6	2.6
South	0.7	0.8	0.5	3.3	3.0	2.9
Midwest	0.6	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.9	3.1
West	0.5	1.1	0.8	3.1	3.5	3.2
Wages and salaries only:						
United States	0.6	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.4	3.3
Northeast	0.6	0.9	0.8	3.3	3.1	3.0
South	0.8	1.2	0.7	3.8	3.5	3.4
Midwest	0.6	1.0	1.1	3.3	3.1	3.3
West	0.6	0.9	0.9	3.1	3.6	3.3

[1]The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.4 percent since last June – 0.2 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 0.6 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 4 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased slightly less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since June 1993 was 10.4 percent compared with 12.2 percent for the ECI for wages and salaries. (See chart 1.)

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Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation has remained in a very narrow band since December 1994, ranging from 2.6 to 3.1 percent; in contrast, the Northeast had increases above the national average in 1995 but the rate of increase slowed. The over-the-year increase in compensation in the Northeast remained lower than the rate for the United States as a whole for the last 6 quarters. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. Before that, the pace of increase in the Northeast routinely exceeded that of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

The protracted slowdown in the rate of increase was limited to the Northeast, as the other regions equaled or surpassed the U.S. rate of increase during the March-June period. The South increased 2.9 percent while the Midwest and West increased 3.1 and 3.2 percent, respectively.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percentage change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the Northeast, 1990-97

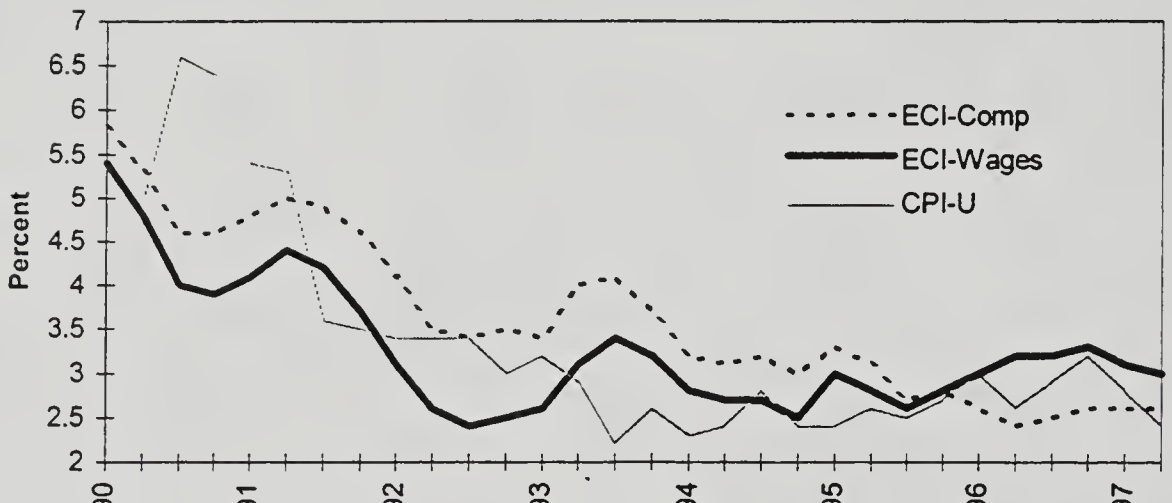
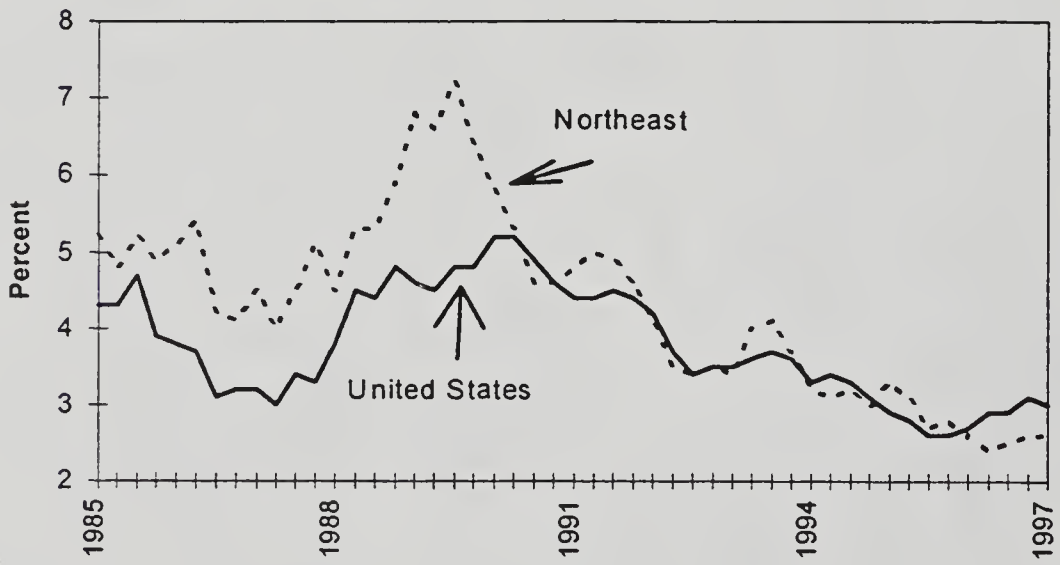


Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-97



Components of Compensation Costs

The 12-month rise in wages and salaries was 0.4 percentage points above the over-the-year increase in total compensation. The last 6 periods have had a faster rate of increase in wages and salaries than in compensation, ending 8 years where more rapidly rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading the trend by about a year. In the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.0 percent in June 96-97.

The smallest rise in compensation costs was 2.6 percent in the Northeast followed by 2.9 percent in the South, 3.1 percent in the Midwest, and 3.2 percent in the West. The 12-month advance in wages and salaries ranged from 3.0 percent in the Northeast to 3.3 percent in the Midwest and West and 3.4 percent in the South. Only in the Midwest did the pace of increase in both compensation and wages and salaries rise.

The wages and salaries index for the Northeast has generally increased at a more moderate rate since the last recession than during the same period of time before it. Since June 1990, near the start of the national recession, the wages and salaries index increased 23.9 percent, just slightly lower than the U.S. increase of 24.1 percent. Over the same period, the Midwest had the fastest rate of increase, 25.7 while the South was lowest at 23.0 percent. During the comparable period prior to mid-1990, the increase for the Northeast was 40.3 percent, substantially higher than that of the U.S., 31.6 percent. (See table 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last 3 months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.8 percent. Over the past 4 years, compensation increases have ranged from 0.6 to 0.9 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was 0.9 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.7 percent since March.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1991-95 were revised to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request.

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News

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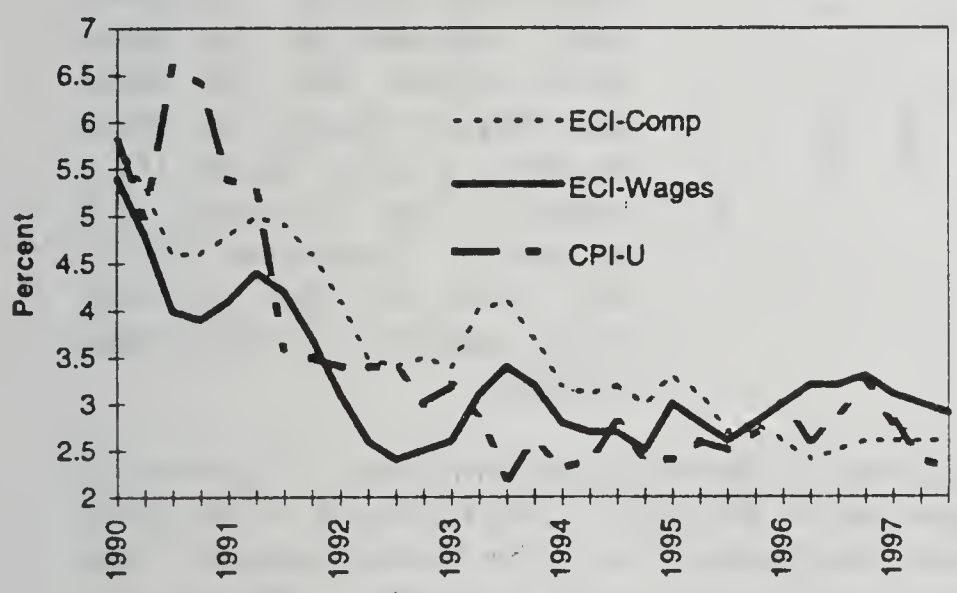
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – SEPTEMBER 1997

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.6 percent over the year ended September 1997, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the ECI for wages and salaries, up 2.9 percent over the year, continued to rise faster than total compensation indicating continued moderation in the cost of benefits.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percentage change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the Northeast, 1990-97



Wages and salaries in the region have been increasing more rapidly than prices, although the pace of increase for both is generally lower than in the past. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.3 percent since last September – 0.3 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 0.6 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 4 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased slightly less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since September 1993 was 10.9 percent compared with 11.9 percent for the ECI for wages and salaries. (See chart 1.)

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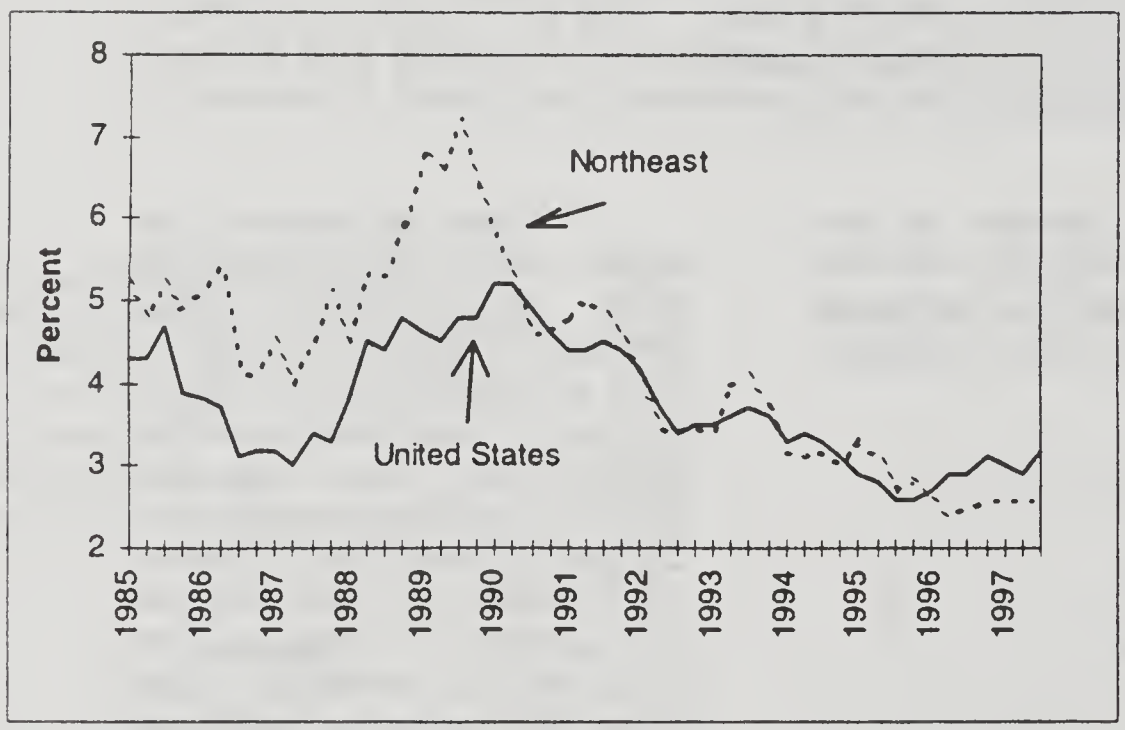
Trends in Compensation Costs

This was the seventh consecutive quarter in which the United States had a higher 12-month increase in compensation than the Northeast. The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation has remained in a very narrow band since December 1994, ranging from 2.6 to 3.2 percent. While the rate of increase in the Northeast was marginally higher throughout 1995, the over-the-year increase has been lower than the rate for the United States since then. The 12-month increase for the region varied little, between 2.4 and 2.8 percent, since September 1995 -- these were the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. The over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. Before that, the pace of increase in the Northeast routinely exceeded that of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

The slowdown in the pace of increase was largely limited to the Northeast. Since March 1995, the ECI for compensation in the Northeast has risen 6.7 percent; in the West and Midwest, the rates were 8.1 and 8.3 percent, respectively. The South has seen less fluctuation with increases between 2.5 and 3.3 percent in almost four years. Over the last year, the South increased 2.9 percent while the Midwest and West increased 3.7 and 3.3 percent, respectively.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-97



Components of Compensation Costs

The 12-month rise in wages and salaries in the Northeast was 0.3 percentage points above the over-the-year increase in total compensation. The last seven periods have had a faster rate of increase in wages and salaries than in compensation. This followed a period of over eight years where more rapidly rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading the trend by about a year. In the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.0 percent in September 96-97, the same as the previous two quarters' over-the-year increase.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries was 2.9 percent in the Northeast, 3.5 percent in the West, 3.7 percent in the South, and 4.2 percent in the Midwest. The increases in the other regions were greater than their June to June increases, substantially so in the Midwest where it was the highest it has been since early 1991. It was also the first time since September 1991 that any region posted an increase larger than 4.0 percent. (See table 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.8 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was 0.9 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.5 percent since June.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, New York, 10014. Requests may also be faxed to (212) 337-2532.

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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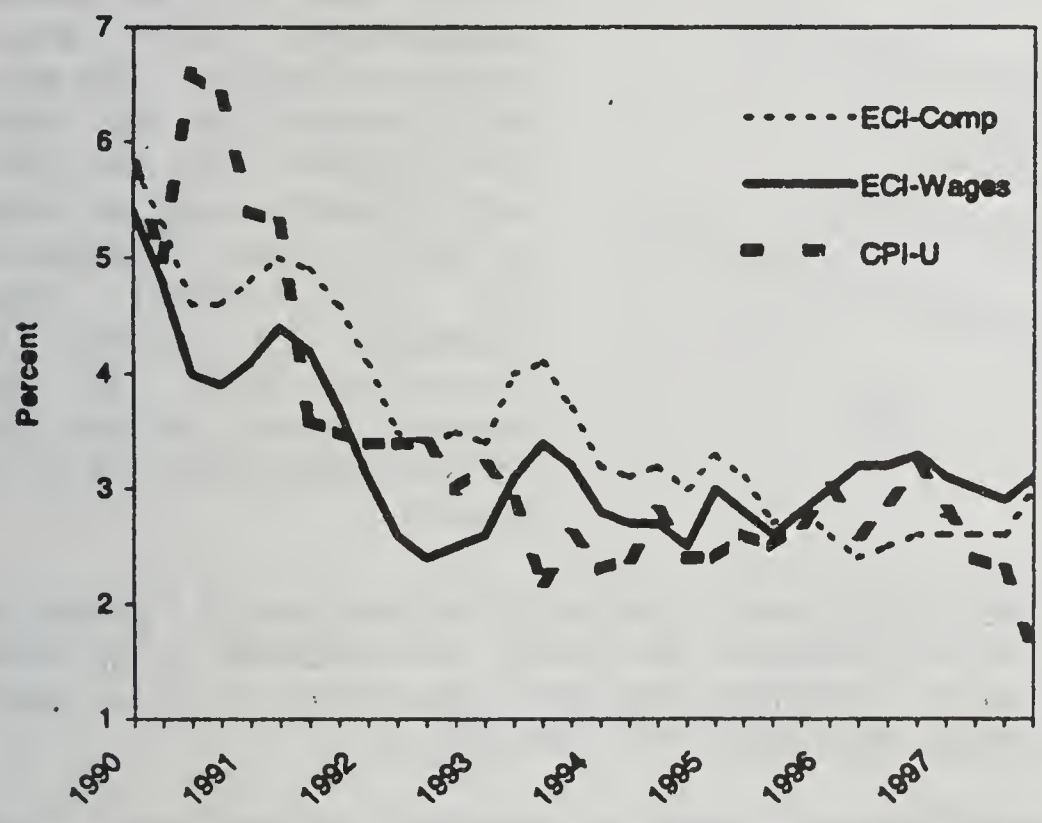
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – DECEMBER 1997

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.0 percent over the year ended December 1997, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the ECI for wages and salaries, up 3.1 percent over the year, continued to rise faster than total compensation.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-97



Wages and salaries in the region have been increasing more rapidly than prices, although the pace of increase for both is generally lower than in the past. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.6 percent since last December – 1.4 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 1.5 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 4 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased slightly less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since December 1993 was 10.3 percent compared with 11.8 percent for the ECI for compensation and 12.2 percent for wages and salaries. (See chart 1.)

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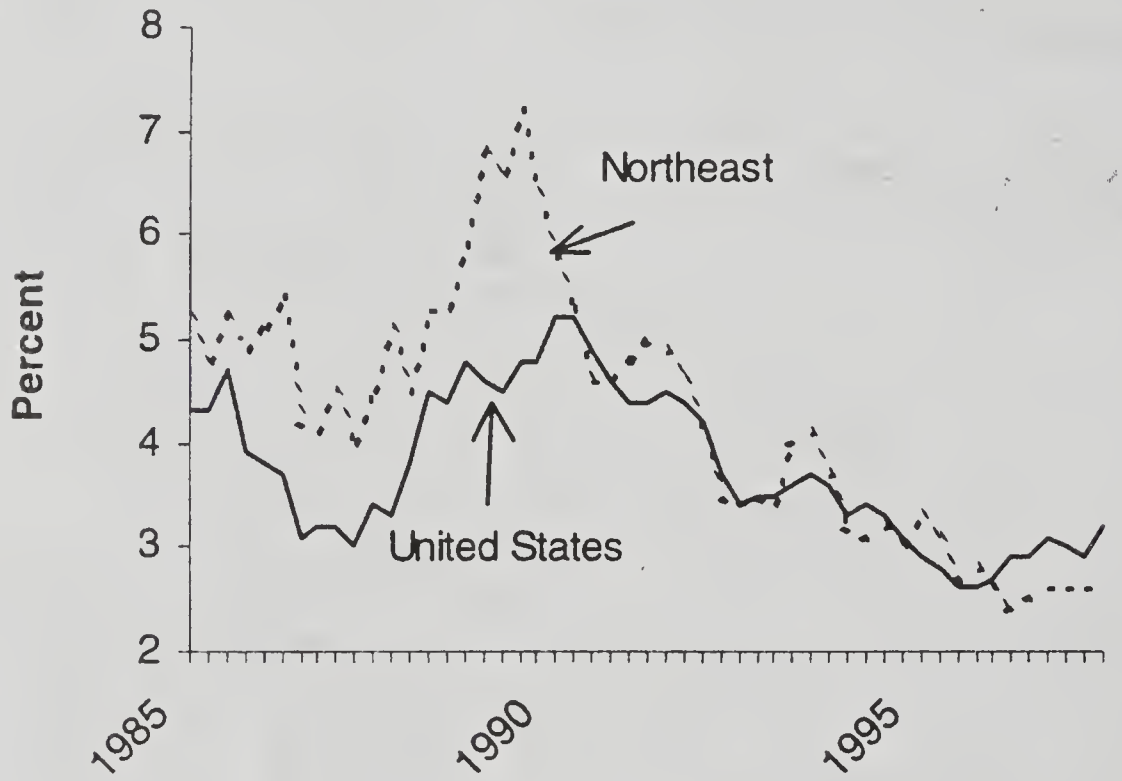
Trends in Compensation Costs

During all of 1996 and 1997 the United States had a higher 12-month increase in compensation than the Northeast. The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation has remained in a narrow band since March 1994, ranging from 2.6 to 3.4 percent. The over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession. Before that, the pace of increase in the Northeast routinely exceeded that of the U.S. The recent 3.0 percent increase in the Northeast ended a nine-quarter period where increases ranged between 2.4 and 2.8 percent -- these were the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

The slowdown in the pace of increase was largely limited to the Northeast. Since March 1995 the ECI for compensation in the Northeast has risen 7.5 percent compared with 8.8 percent in each of the other regions. Over the last year, compensation in the South increased 3.8 percent while the Midwest and West increased 3.6 and 3.5 percent, respectively.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-97



Components of Compensation Costs

The 12-month rise in wages and salaries in the Northeast was 0.1 percentage points above the over-the-year increase in total compensation. The last eight periods have had a faster rate of increase in wages and salaries than in compensation. This followed a period of over eight years where more rapidly rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading the trend by about a year. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.3 percent in December 96-97. In the previous seven quarters, the increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.0 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries was 3.1 percent in the Northeast, 3.7 percent in the West, 4.2 percent in the Midwest, and 4.7 percent in the South. The increases in the other regions were greater than their September to September increases, substantially so in the South where it was the largest increase for any region since June 1990. (See table 2.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 1.2 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was 1.2 percent, while benefits costs increased 1.1 percent since September.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration. In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-97, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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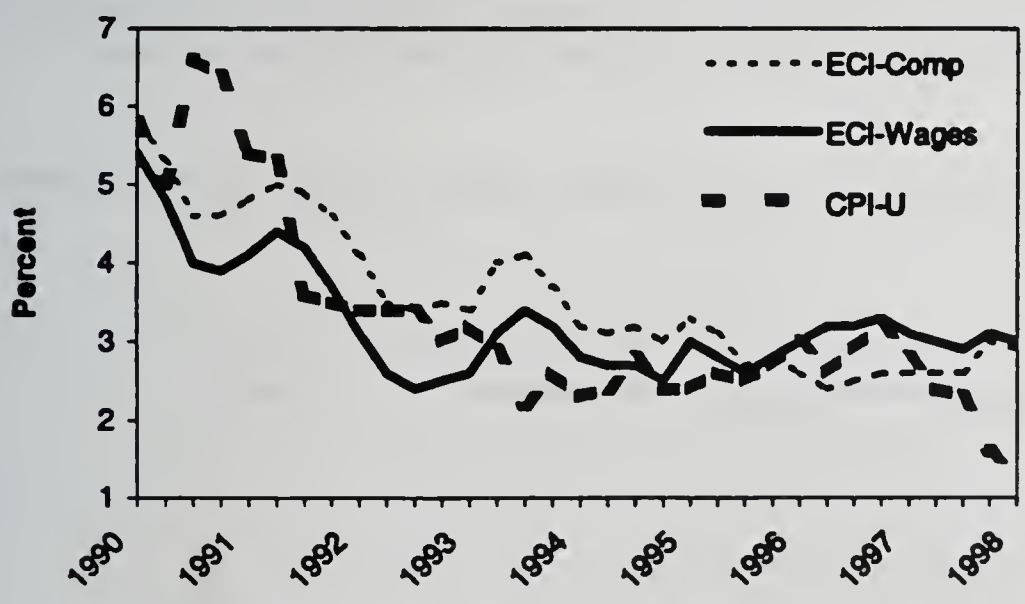
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – MARCH 1998

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 2.9 percent over the year ended March 1998, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the ECI for wages and salaries, up 3.0 percent over the year, continued to rise slightly faster than total compensation.

Wages and salaries in the region have been increasing more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.2 percent since last March – 1.7 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 1.8 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. Over the last 4 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased slightly less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since March 1994 was 9.7 percent compared with 11.8 percent for the ECI for compensation and 12.6 percent for wages and salaries. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-98

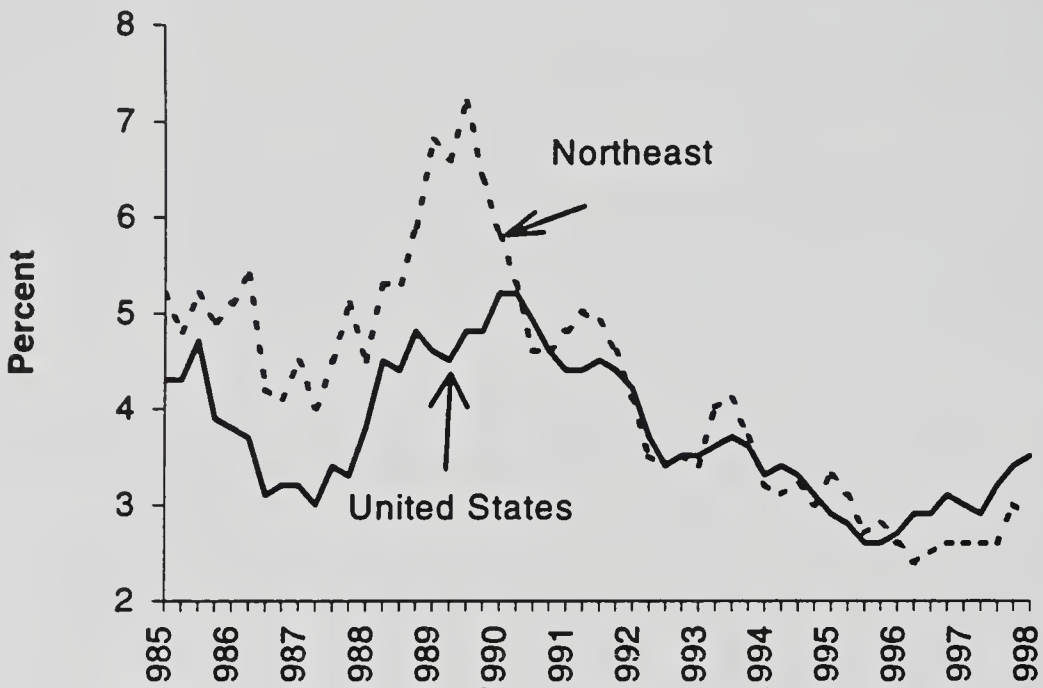


Trends in Compensation Costs

Since March 1996 the United States has had a higher 12-month increase in compensation than the Northeast. The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation has remained in a narrow band over the last four years, ranging from 2.7 to 3.5 percent, with the lowest rates in the beginning of the period. The over-the year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together since 1990 when the rate of increase in the Northeast dropped sharply just prior to the 1990-91 recession after a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. Except for December 1997, 12-month increases in the Northeast have ranged between 2.4 and 2.9 percent since September 1995 -- the only occasions since the series began in 1982 where the rate has fallen below 3.0 percent. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

The slowdown in the pace of increase was largely limited to the Northeast. For instance, since December 1995, the last month when the increase in the Northeast was higher than another region, the ECI for compensation in the Northeast has risen 6.4 percent compared with 7.8 to 8.2 percent in the other regions. Over the last year, compensation in the South increased 3.6 percent while the Midwest and West each increased 3.8 percent. The 12-month increase for the U.S. exceeded that of the Northeast by 0.6 percentage point; along with September 1997, that is the most that the U.S. figure has been above the Northeast. Prior to 1990, the gap was consistently in the opposite direction with the Northeast exceeding the U.S. by 2.4 percentage points in September 1989.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-98

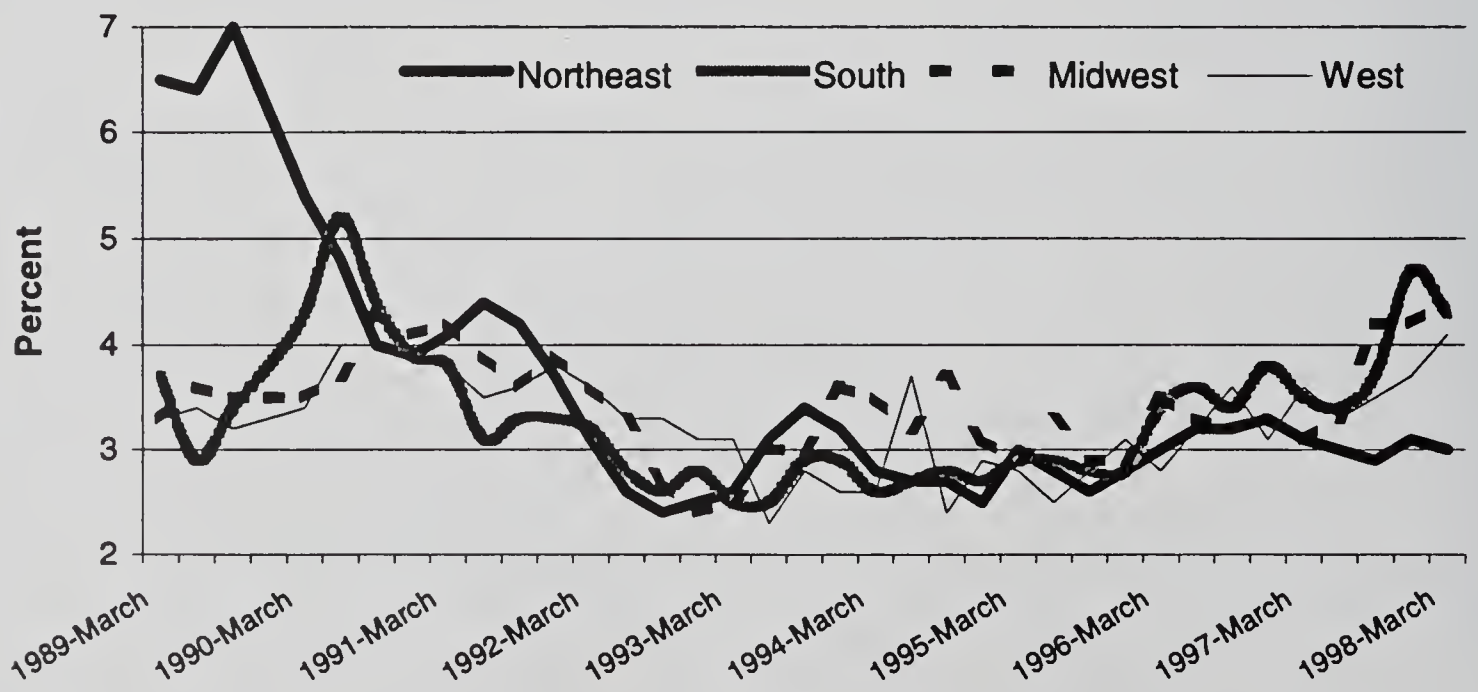


Components of Compensation Costs

The more-than-two-year period of wages and salaries increasing more rapidly than total compensation followed a period of over eight years where rising benefit costs kept the overall compensation rate above wages and salaries. The same shift occurred in the other three regions with the West and Midwest leading the trend by about a year. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.3 percent in March 97-98, the same as in December. In the previous seven quarters, the increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.0 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries was 3.0 percent in the Northeast, 4.1 percent in the West, 4.3 percent in the South, and 4.4 percent in the Midwest. This was the first month where all of the other three regions had over-the-year increases of 4 percent or greater since 1990. (See table 2 and chart 3.) As in total compensation, the faster pace of increase in the other regions is reflected in the gap between the Northeast and the national 12-month rate of increase. The difference rose to 1 percentage point -- the largest gap since the series began -- in March.

Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-98



Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.7 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was 0.8 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.3 percent since December.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available which provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1993-97 were revised to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request. The seasonal factors for 1998 will be published in the Summer 1998 issue of the BLS periodical, Compensation and Working Conditions.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

IRX

News

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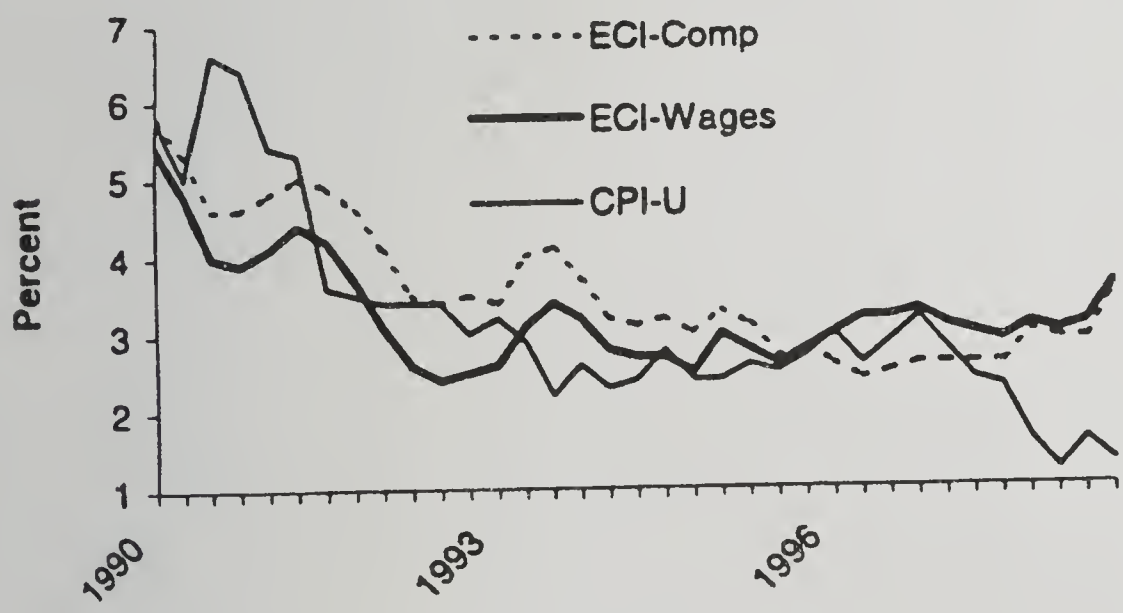
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – SEPTEMBER 1998

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.5 percent over the year ended September 1998, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the September 1998 increase was well above that of one year earlier when the compensation index rose 2.6 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.6 percent over the year, continuing to rise in pace with the overall index.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.3 percent since last September–2.2 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 2.3 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-98



Over the last 5 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since September 1993 was 12.4 percent compared with 15.4 percent for the ECI for compensation and 15.9 percent for wages and salaries. Even over the longer term, increases in wages and salaries have edged those of the CPI. Since September 1975, when wages and salaries data were first released for the Northeast, that index has more than tripled, increasing 208.4 percent compared with a 201.4 percent rise in consumer prices.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation, which had remained in a narrow band between 1994 and 1997, ranging from 2.6 to 3.4 percent, was 3.8 percent. The over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast had generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1993-97 were revised with the March 1998 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request. The seasonal factors for 1998 are published in the Summer 1998 issue of the BLS periodical, Compensation and Working Conditions.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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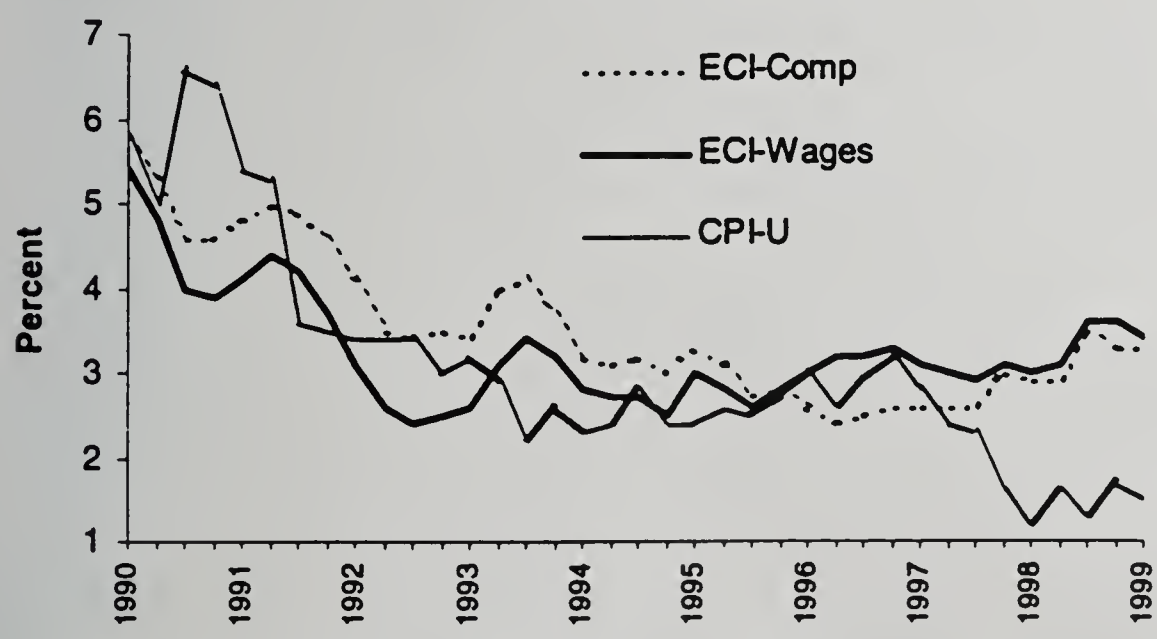
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – MARCH 1999

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.3 percent over the year ended March 1999, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the over-the-year increase for each quarter from December 1997 to March 1999 has ranged from 2.9 to 3.5 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.4 percent over the year. Over the last six and half years, the over-the-year increase in wages and salaries has ranged from 2.5 to 3.6 percent.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.5 percent since last March, 1.8 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 1.9 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-99



Over the last five years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI. The increase in the CPI-U since March 1994 was 11.4 percent compared with 15.5 percent for the ECI for compensation and 16.4 percent for wages and salaries. Even over the longer term, increases in wages and salaries have just edged those of the CPI. Since September 1975, when wages and salaries data were first released for the Northeast, both indexes more than tripled, with wages and salaries increasing 212.3 percent compared with a 203.7 percent rise in consumer prices.

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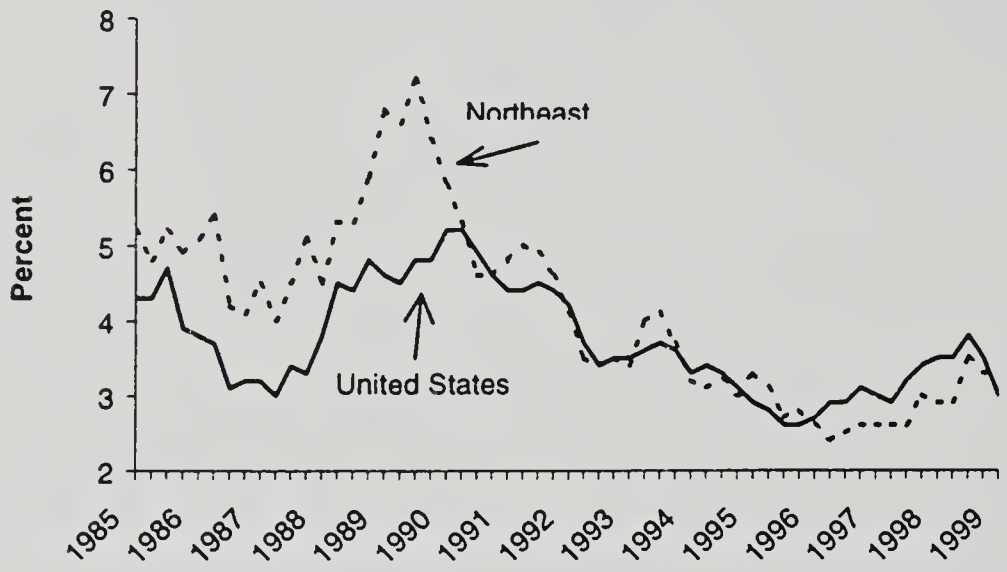
Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation, which had remained in a narrow band between 1994 and 1997, ranging from 2.6 to 3.4 percent, was 3.0 percent after reaching 3.8 percent last September. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-99



While the pace of increase in all the regions slowed in response to the recession at the beginning of the decade, the deceleration was most notable in the Northeast and persisted there. However, since September the pace of increase in the ECI for compensation for the Northeast rose by 3.3 to 3.5 percent, compared with 2.4 to 3.0 percent during the past three years; during the last three quarters the over-the-year increases in the other regions generally slowed.

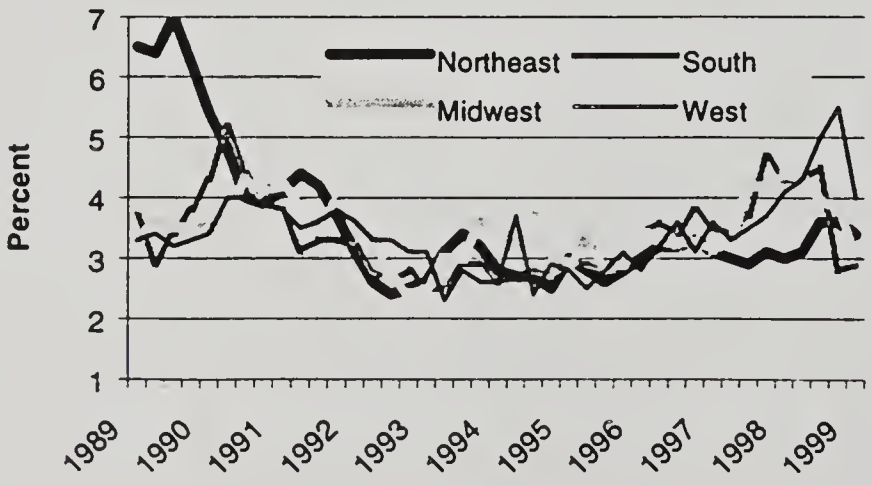
Over the last year, compensation in the Northeast increased 3.3 percent. The Midwest increased 2.5 percent, the South, 2.7 percent, and the West, 3.8 percent. The last time the Northeast had a faster rate of increase than two other regions was in December 1995.

Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.2 percent in March 1998-99. Over the last four years, the over-the-year benefits increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.6 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.3 percent; it was 4.0 percent in the West, 3.4 in the Northeast, 3.1 percent in the Midwest and 2.9 in the South. This was only the second time since March 1996 where the 12-month increase fell below 3.0 in any of the other regions. (See table 2 and chart 3.) Over the last five years, the wages and salaries index for the U.S. increased 17.8 percent as the Midwest rose 18.2 percent, the South rose 18.3 percent, and the West increased 18.5 percent while the Northeast index was up 16.4 percent.

Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-99



Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.4 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was also 0.4 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.2 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire,

New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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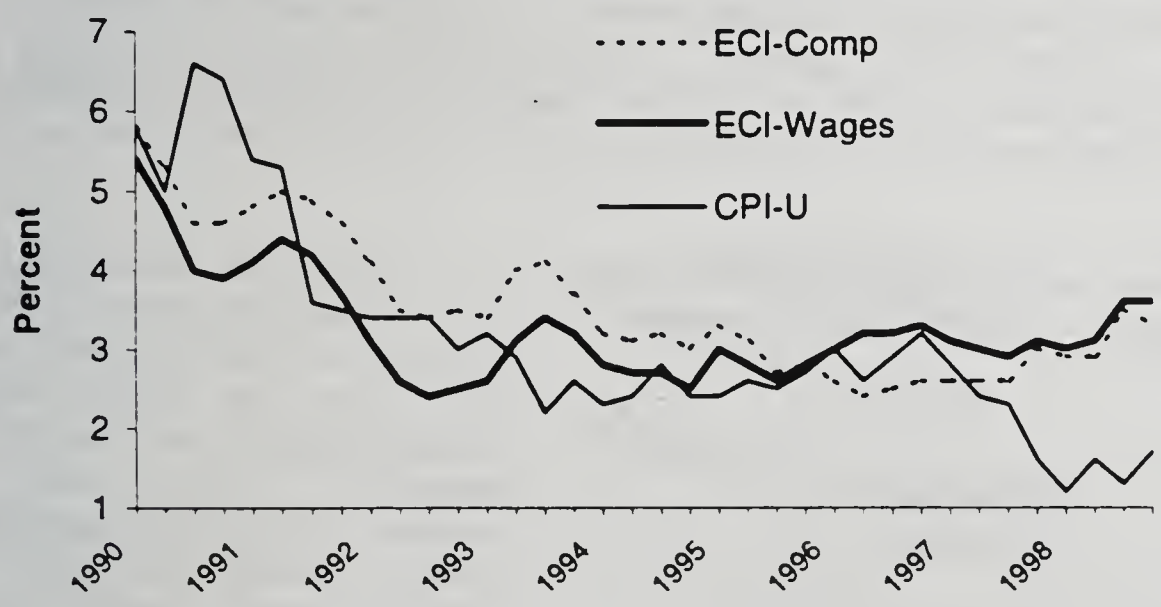
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – DECEMBER 1998

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.3 percent over the year ended December 1998, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the over-the-year increase for each quarter from December 1997 to December 1998 has ranged from 2.9 to 3.5 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.6 percent over the year, the same as in September. The last time the over-the-year increase in the wages and salaries index was higher was 3.7 percent in December 1991.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.7 percent since last December–1.6 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 1.9 percentage points below the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-98



Over the last 5 years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI; the increase in the CPI-U since December 1993 was 12.1 percent compared with 15.6 percent for the ECI for compensation and 16.3 percent for wages and salaries. Even over the longer term, increases in wages and salaries have edged those of the CPI. Since September 1975, when wages and salaries data were first released for the Northeast, both indexes more than tripled, with wages and salaries increasing 210.7 percent compared with a 202.5 percent rise in consumer prices.

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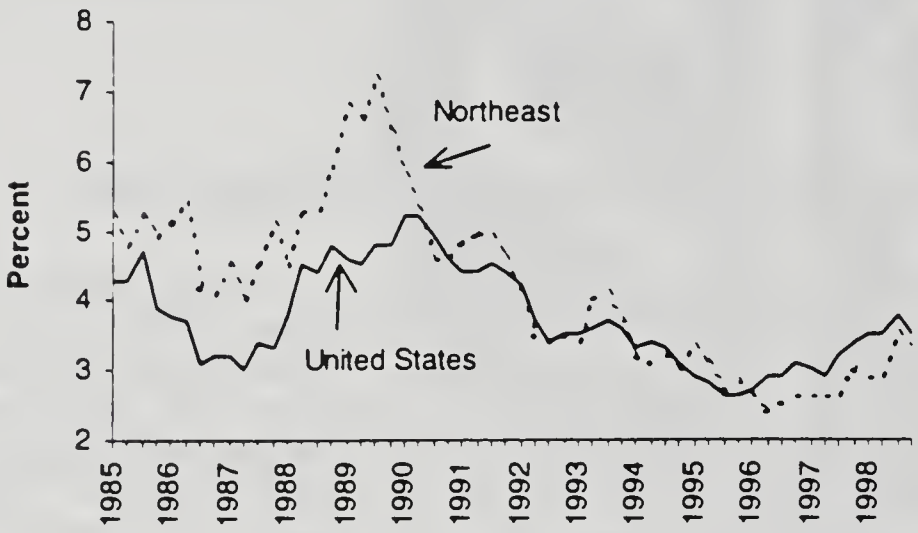
Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation, which had remained in a narrow band between 1994 and 1997, ranging from 2.6 to 3.4 percent, was 3.5 percent after reaching 3.8 percent in September. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-98



While the pace of increase in all the regions slowed in response to the recession at the beginning of the decade, the deceleration was most notable in the Northeast and persisted there. In the last three years the ECI for compensation in the Northeast has risen only 9.2 percent compared with 10.0 to 12.0 percent in the other regions.

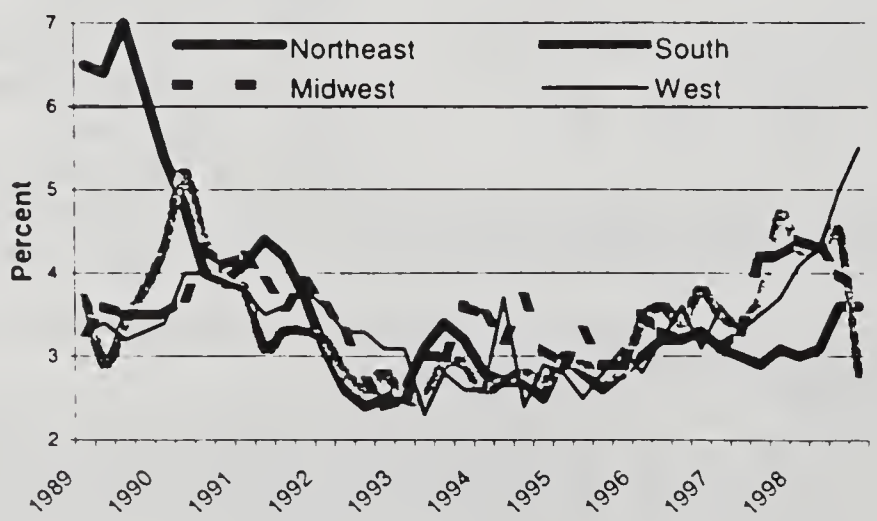
Over the last year, compensation in the Northeast and the Midwest increased 3.3 percent. The South increased 2.6 percent and the West, 4.9 percent. Until the September advance, 12-month increases in the Northeast had ranged between 2.4 and 3.0 percent during the last three years--the only period since the series began in 1982 when the rate fell below 3.0 percent.

Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation is made up of wages and salaries along with benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.4 percent in December 97-98. Over the last four years, the benefits increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.9 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.9 percent. In the regions, it was 5.5 percent in the West, 3.8 in the Midwest, 3.6 percent in the Northeast and 2.8 in the South. This was the first time since March 1996 where the 12-month increase fell below 3.0 in any of the other regions. (See table 2 and chart 3.) Over the last five years, the wages and salaries index for the U.S. increased 18.0 percent as the South rose 17.8 percent, the Midwest rose 18.5 percent, and the West increased 19.6 percent while the Northeast index was up 16.3 percent.

Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-98



Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.7 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was also 0.7 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.6 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and

Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures change over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1993-97 were revised with the March 1998 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request. The seasonal factors for 1998 are published in the Summer 1998 issue of the BLS periodical, Compensation and Working Conditions. New seasonally adjusted factors for 1999, and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years, will be available Tuesday, April 27, 1999 on the Internet at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm or upon request.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-98, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees

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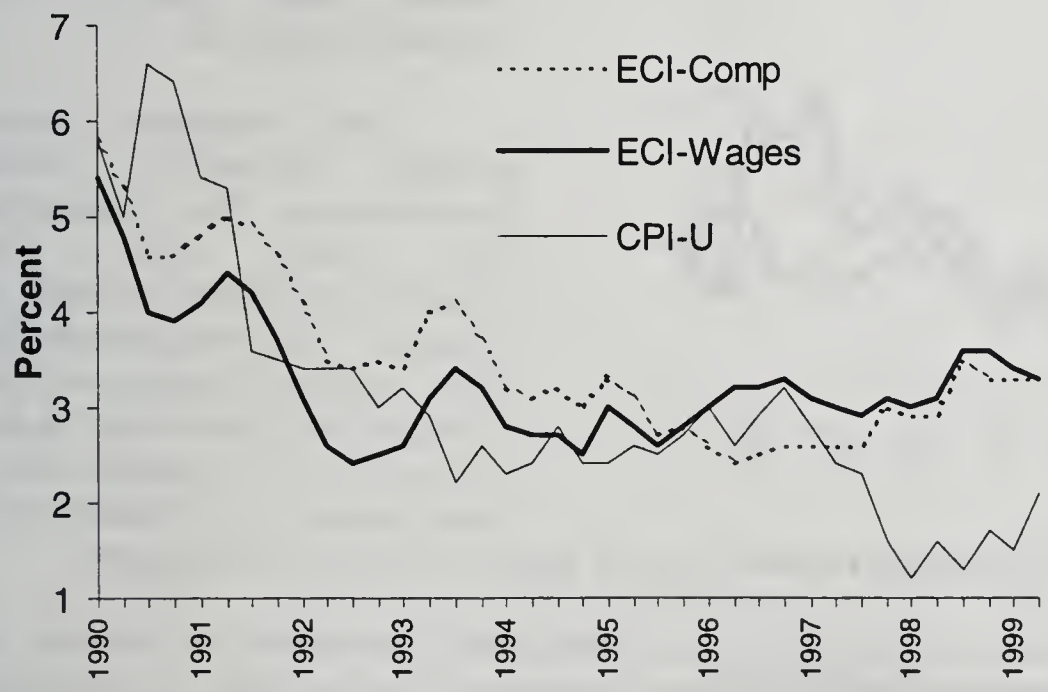
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – SEPTEMBER 1999

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.2 percent over the year ended September 1999, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that over-the-year increases from December 1997 to September 1999 have ranged from 2.9 to 3.5 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.3 percent over the year.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.5 percent since last September, 0.7 percentage point less than the increase in compensation costs and 0.8 percentage point less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-99



Over the last six years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI. The increase in the CPI-U since September 1993 was 15.2 percent compared with 19.1 percent for the ECI for compensation and 19.8 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation was 3.1 percent. That was down from a recent peak of 3.8 percent in September 1998 that was the largest increase in over six years. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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Over the last year, compensation in the Midwest increased 2.9 percent; in the South, 3.1 percent; and in the West, 3.5 percent. Each of the three over-the-year increases for the Northeast in 1999 were at least marginally higher than those of the South and Midwest, the first time since December 1995 that the Northeast rate was higher than those of two other regions.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-99

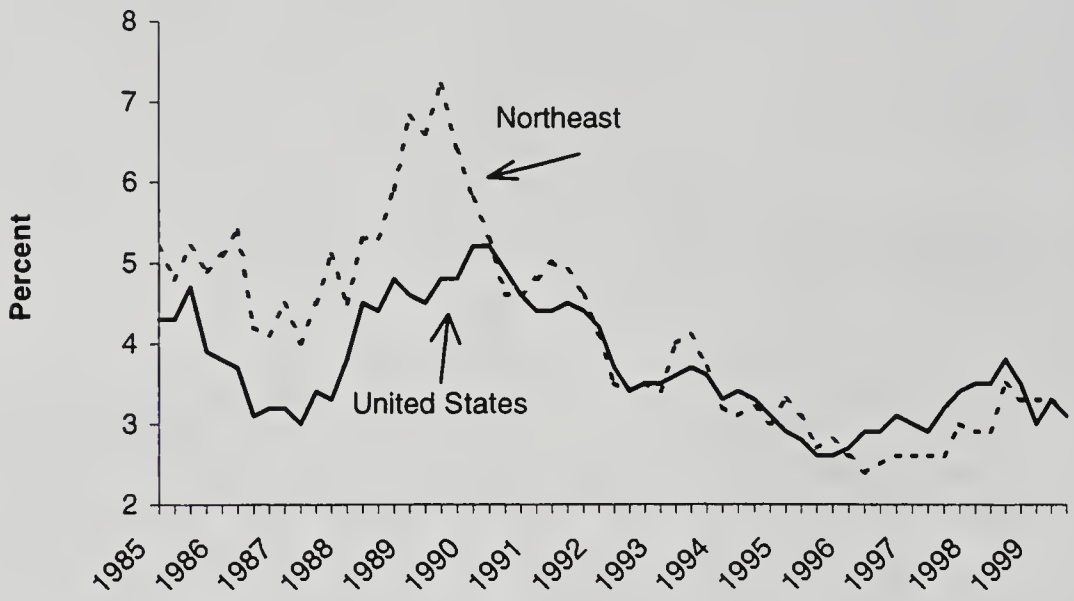
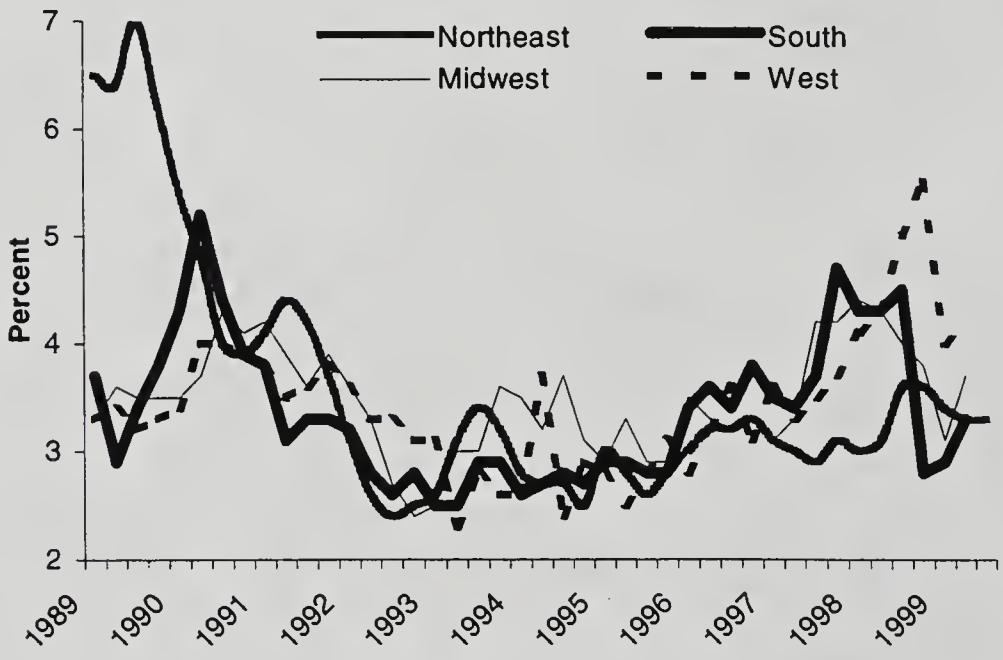


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-99



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 2.8 percent in September 1998-99. From September 1995 to March 1998, the over-the-year benefits increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.3 percent. Since then, the growth has been from 2.2 to 2.8 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.2 percent; it was 3.6 percent in the Midwest, 3.4 in the West, 3.3 percent in the Northeast and 2.7 percent in the South. (See table 2 and chart 3.) Since 1992, the over-the-year increase in wages and salaries in the Northeast has ranged from 2.4 to 3.6 percent.

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months compensation costs for private industry workers rose 0.8 percent. The wages and salaries index increase was also 0.8 percent, while benefits costs increased 0.9 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The national report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1994-98 were revised with the March 1999 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request. The seasonal factors for 1999 are published in the Summer 1999 issue of the BLS periodical, Compensation and Working Conditions. New seasonally adjusted factors for 1999 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm or upon request.

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Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1985-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.0	80.5	86.2	86.6	87.5	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.1	1.5	4.3	5.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
-June	85.7	81.3	86.9	87.1	88.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.9	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1	4.7
-September	86.8	82.8	87.8	88.1	89.1	1.3	1.8	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.7	5.2	4.8	3.6	5.4
-December	87.3	83.5	88.3	88.4	89.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.6	3.9	4.9	4.1	3.2	3.9
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1985-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1985-March	85.8	80.9	87.4	87.4	88.1	1.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.1	4.1	4.8	3.8	3.6	4.4
-June	86.7	82.0	88.1	88.5	88.9	1.0	1.4	0.8	1.3	0.9	4.3	4.9	3.6	4.5	4.6
-September	87.8	83.4	89.1	89.5	90.0	1.3	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.2	4.8	5.2	4.8	4.1	5.5
-December	88.3	84.3	89.6	89.8	90.3	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	3.6	3.7
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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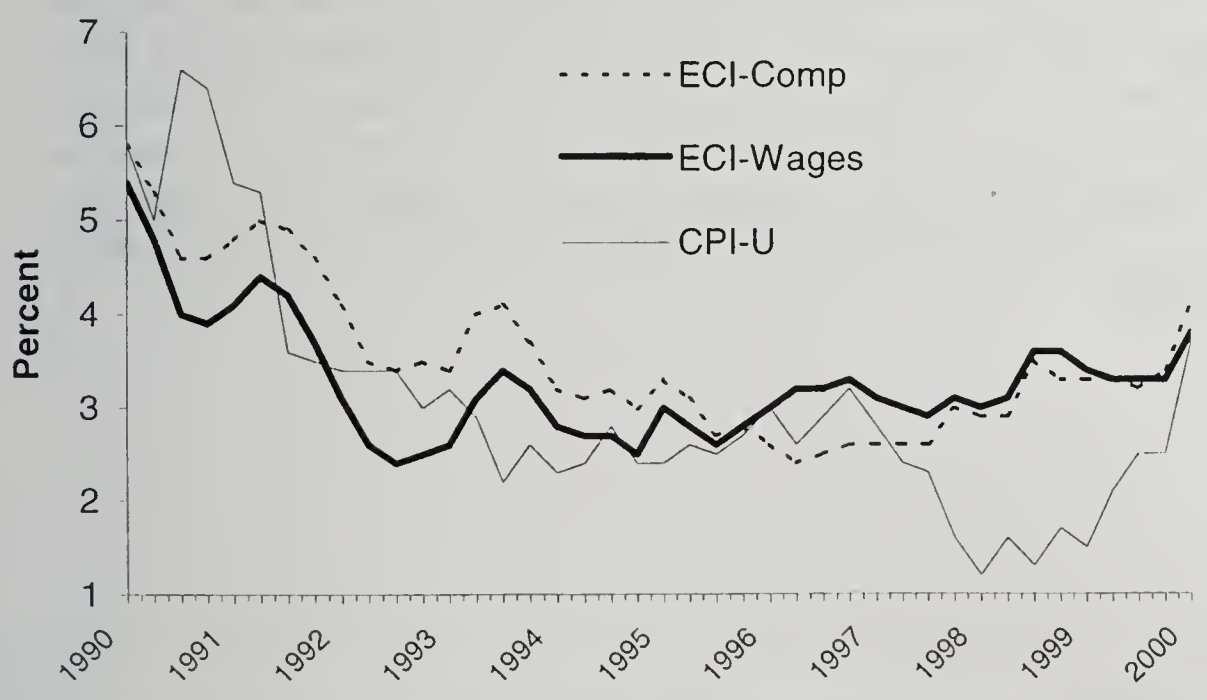
EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – MARCH 2000

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast region increased 4.1 percent over the year ended March 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the over-the-year increase was the largest recorded since September 1993 when it equaled that rate. The over-the-year increases for each quarter of last year ranged from 3.2 to 3.4 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.8 percent over the year.

The total compensation series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, but the rate difference has moderated this quarter. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 3.7 percent since last March, 0.4 percentage point less than the increase in total compensation costs. In contrast, the increase in the Northeast CPI-U roughly equaled the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2000



Over the last five years, the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI. The increase in the CPI-U since March 1995 was 12.8 percent compared with 16.5 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 17.3 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 4.6 percent, which was the largest over-the-year quarterly increase since Decem-

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ber 1990 when it equaled that rate. Over-the-year increases in each quarter of 1999 have ranged from 3.0 to 3.4 percent. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S.

Over the last year, total compensation grew by 4.2 percent in the South, roughly equal to the Northeast rate, but increased more sharply in the West and Midwest, up 4.8 and 5.1 percent, respectively. The pace of annual increase accelerated in each region since March 1999 with each area recording its largest increase in a year. The pace of growth rose fastest in the Midwest where the 5.1 percent rise was 2.6 percentage points more than the annual increase in March 1999.

Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. For the U.S., benefit costs for private industry workers increased a sharp 5.5 percent for the 12-months ended March 2000. From March 1995 through December 1999, the over-the-year benefits increase ranged from 1.6 to 3.4 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 4.2 percent. Regional increases in wages and salaries were ranked similar to those for total compensation. The South increased 3.7 percent, which was almost equal to the rate increase for the Northeast. The Midwest and West posted higher increases of 4.6 and 4.7 percent, respectively. (See table 2.) During all of 1999, the wages and salaries increase for the Northeast held very steady at 3.3 to 3.4 percent.

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months, total compensation costs rose 1.5 percent. Wages and salaries increased 1.2 percent while benefit costs rose 2.3 percent, largely the result of higher costs for health insurance, supplemental pay, and paid leave.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The national report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1995-99 were revised with the March 2000 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonal adjustment factors for 2000 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1986-2000, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1986-2000, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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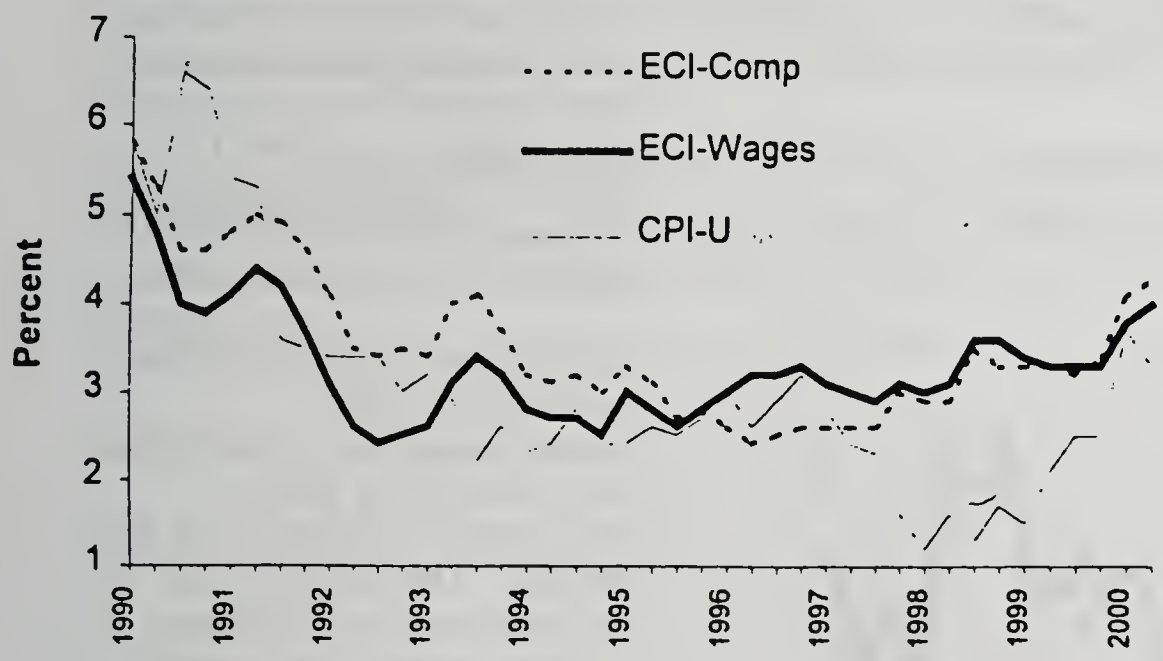
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – JUNE 2000

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 4.3 percent over the year ended June 2000, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John LWieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the over-the-year increase was about the same as the increase in March (4.1 percent). The over-the-year percent increases for the ECI for compensation for the Northeast were under 4 percent from December 1993 to December 1999. Rates have gradually trended upward since June 1996, when the increase was just 2.4 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 4.0 percent over the year.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 3.3 percent since last June, 1.0 percentage point less than the increase in total compensation costs and 0.7 percentage point less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2000



Over the last five years, the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI. The increase in the CPI-U since June 1995 was 12.5 percent compared with 16.6 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 17.7 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 4.6 percent, equal to the rate in March. These were the largest annual increases since December 1990 when the rate was also 4.6 percent. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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The Northeast's 4.3 percent increase along with an identical rise in the South was the lowest among the regions. The Midwest increased by 4.9 percent followed by a 4.7 -percent increase in the West. Each of these June 2000 increases was similar to those in March and all were above those posted in 1999.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-2000.

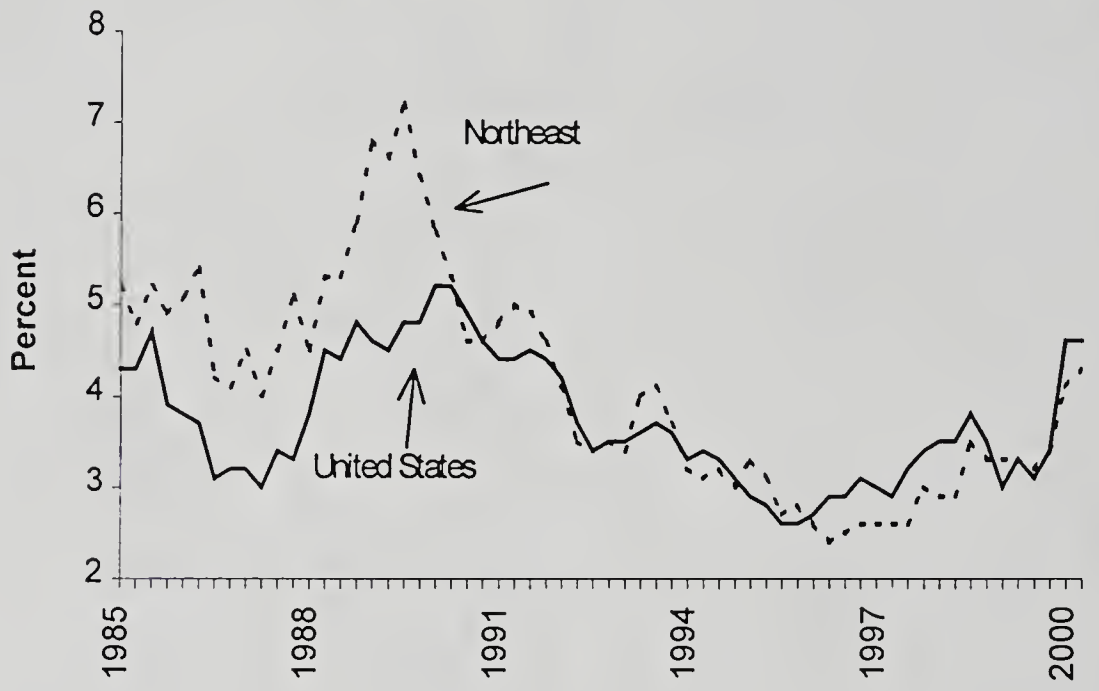
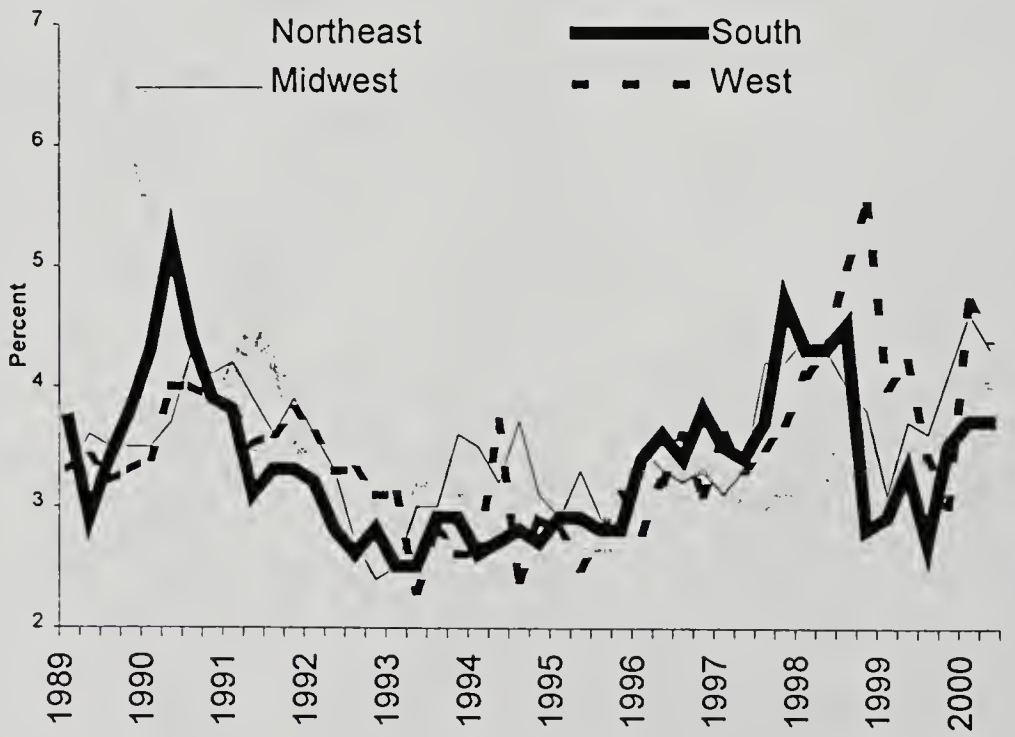


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-2000



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs for private industry workers increased 5.7 percent between June 1999 and June 2000, well above the 2.5 percent increase from June 1998 to June 1999. The rise in benefit costs was due, in part, to higher payments for health insurance, supplemental pay, and paid leave.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 4.1 percent, up from 3.6 percent in the same period a year ago. The South had the lowest regional increase at 3.7 with the Northeast close at 4.0 percent. As with total compensation, the West and Midwest led the country with wage gains of 4.4 and 4.3 percent, respectively. (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months total compensation costs rose 1.1 percent. Wages and salaries increased 1.0 percent while benefit costs rose 1.2 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

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TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1995-99 were revised with the March 2000 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonal adjustment factors for 1999, and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index
for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1986-2000, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8
-June	148.5	147.6	146.7	150.7	148.8	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.7

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1986-2000, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7
-June	145.4	143.7	144.6	147.1	146.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.4

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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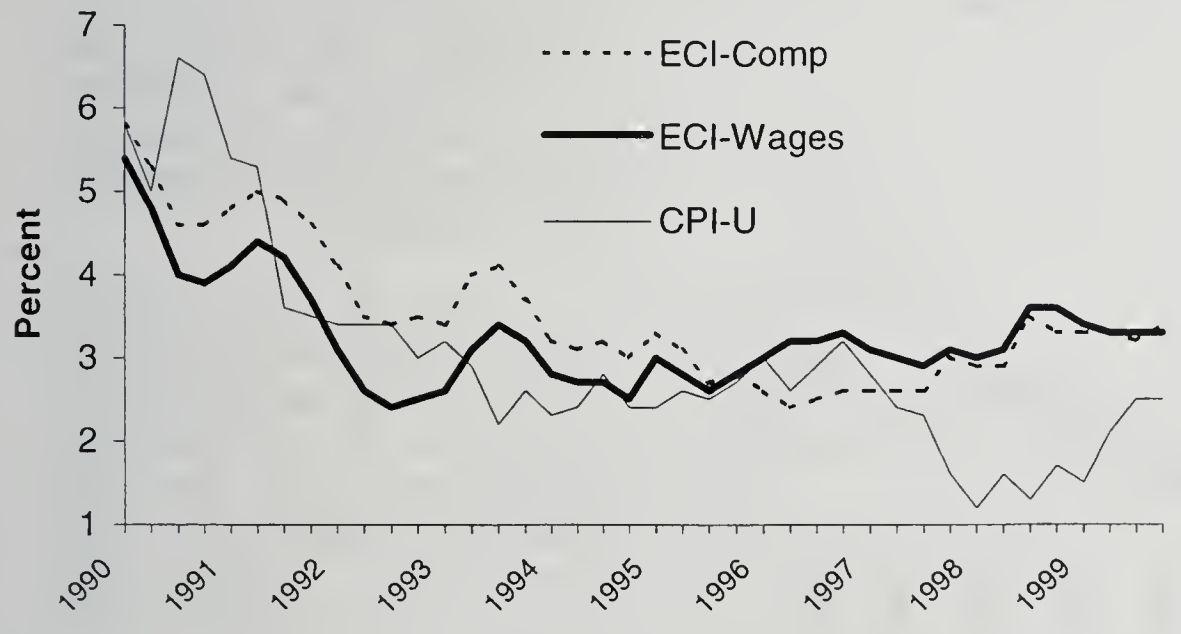
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – DECEMBER 1999

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.4 percent over the year ended December 1999, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that over-the-year increases recorded each quarter from December 1998 to December 1999 have ranged from 3.2 to 3.4 percent. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.3 percent over the year.

Both series continued to rise more rapidly than prices, which have been increasing at a very modest rate. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.5 percent since last December, 0.9 percentage points less than the increase in compensation costs and 0.8 percentage points less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-99



Over the last five years the CPI-U for the Northeast has generally increased less than the ECI. The increase in the CPI-U since December 1994 was 12.3 percent compared with 16.1 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 17.2 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation was 3.4 percent. Since December 1998 the rate of increase has ranged from 3.0 to 3.5 percent, down from a recent peak of 3.8 percent in September 1998. Over-the-year increases for the U.S. and Northeast generally trended together after the rate in the Northeast dropped sharply just before the 1990-91 recession. That followed a protracted period when increases in the Northeast routinely exceeded those of the U.S. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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Over the last year, total compensation grew at about the same pace in all regions of the country, increasing by 3.4 percent in the West and 3.5 percent in both the South and the Midwest. The pace of annual increase accelerated somewhat in both the South and the Midwest since December 1998 with each area recording its largest increase in a year. The pace of growth slowed in the West where the 3.4 percent rise was 1.5 percentage points less than the over-the-year increase in December 1998.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1985-99

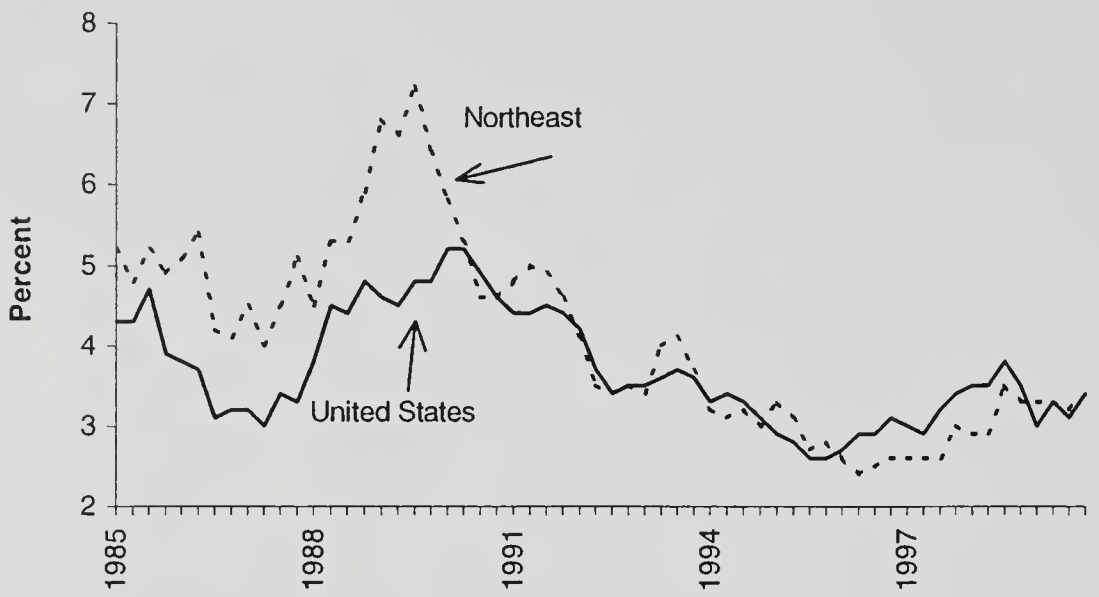
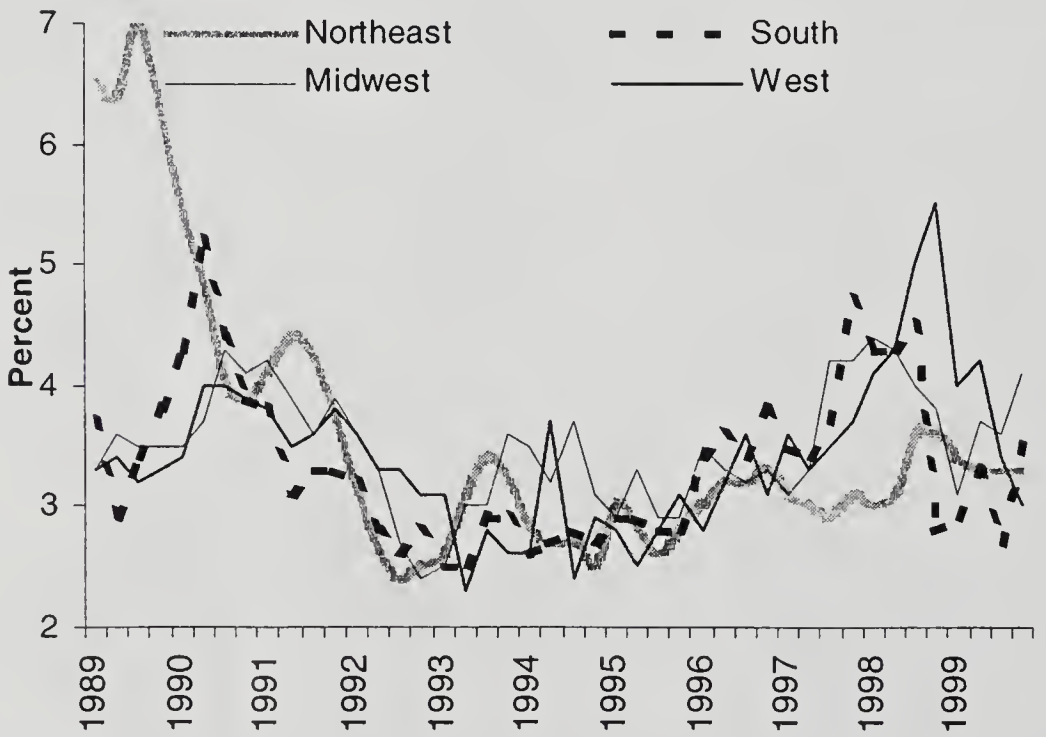


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-99



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 3.4 percent in December 1998-99. From March 1995 through September 1999, the over-the-year benefits increase ranged from 1.6 to 2.9 percent.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.5 percent. There was far less similarity in rates throughout the regions than was found in total compensation. The South and the Midwest increased 3.5 and 4.1 percent, respectively, again moving higher over the last year, while the West increased 3.0 percent, below the rate of the last three years which ranged from 3.3 to 5.5 percent. (See table 2 and chart 3.) During all of 1999, the wages and salaries increase for the Northeast held very steady at 3.3 to 3.4 percent.

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months total compensation costs and the wages and salaries index for private industry workers each rose 1.0 percent. Benefits costs increased 1.4 percent.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time earnings are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years; this makes it more representative and reduces respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1994-98 were revised with the March 1999 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors and are available upon request. The seasonal factors for 1999 are published in the Summer 1999 issue of the BLS periodical, Compensation and Working Conditions. New seasonally adjusted factors for 1999, and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://stats.bls.gov/ecthome.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1986-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	88.2	84.6	89.3	89.4	90.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	0.8	3.8	5.1	3.6	3.2	3.2
-June	88.9	85.7	89.9	89.6	90.8	0.8	1.3	0.7	0.2	0.6	3.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	2.8
-September	89.5	86.3	90.7	90.3	91.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.4	3.1	4.2	3.3	2.5	2.4
-December	90.1	86.9	91.2	90.9	91.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	3.2	4.1	3.3	2.8	2.2
1987-March	91.0	88.4	91.7	91.6	92.5	1.0	1.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	3.2	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.4
-June	91.6	89.1	92.4	92.4	92.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.0	4.0	2.8	3.1	2.0
-September	92.5	90.2	93.1	93.1	93.7	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	3.4	4.5	2.6	3.1	2.7
-December	93.1	91.3	94.0	93.5	94.1	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.4	0.4	3.3	5.1	3.1	2.9	2.7
1988-March	94.5	92.4	95.1	95.4	95.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	2.0	1.4	3.8	4.5	3.7	4.1	3.1
-June	95.7	93.8	96.7	96.2	96.3	1.3	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.9	4.5	5.3	4.7	4.1	4.0
-September	96.6	95.0	97.4	97.0	97.0	0.9	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.7	4.4	5.3	4.6	4.2	3.5
-December	97.6	96.7	98.1	97.9	97.7	1.0	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	4.8	5.9	4.4	4.7	3.8
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1986-99, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1986-March	89.2	85.0	90.6	90.7	91.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.8	4.0	5.1	3.7	3.8	3.3
-June	89.9	86.4	91.3	90.9	91.6	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.2	0.7	3.7	5.4	3.6	2.7	3.0
-September	90.6	87.0	92.0	91.5	91.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.3	3.2	4.3	3.3	2.2	2.1
-December	91.1	87.6	92.4	92.2	92.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.7	3.2	3.9	3.1	2.7	2.4
1987-March	92.0	89.1	92.9	93.1	93.2	1.0	1.7	0.5	1.0	0.8	3.1	4.8	2.5	2.6	2.4
-June	92.6	89.9	93.6	93.9	93.2	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.0	3.0	4.1	2.5	3.3	1.7
-September	93.5	91.0	94.4	94.7	94.6	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.5	3.2	4.6	2.6	3.5	2.9
-December	94.1	91.9	95.0	94.9	94.9	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.3	3.3	4.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
1988-March	95.0	92.7	95.7	95.9	95.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.1	3.3	4.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
-June	96.1	94.0	97.2	96.5	96.7	1.2	1.4	1.6	0.6	0.8	3.8	4.6	3.8	2.8	3.8
-September	97.0	95.1	97.9	97.4	97.7	0.9	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.7	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.3
-December	98.0	96.9	98.4	98.2	98.2	1.0	1.9	0.5	0.8	0.5	4.1	5.4	3.6	3.5	3.5
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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News

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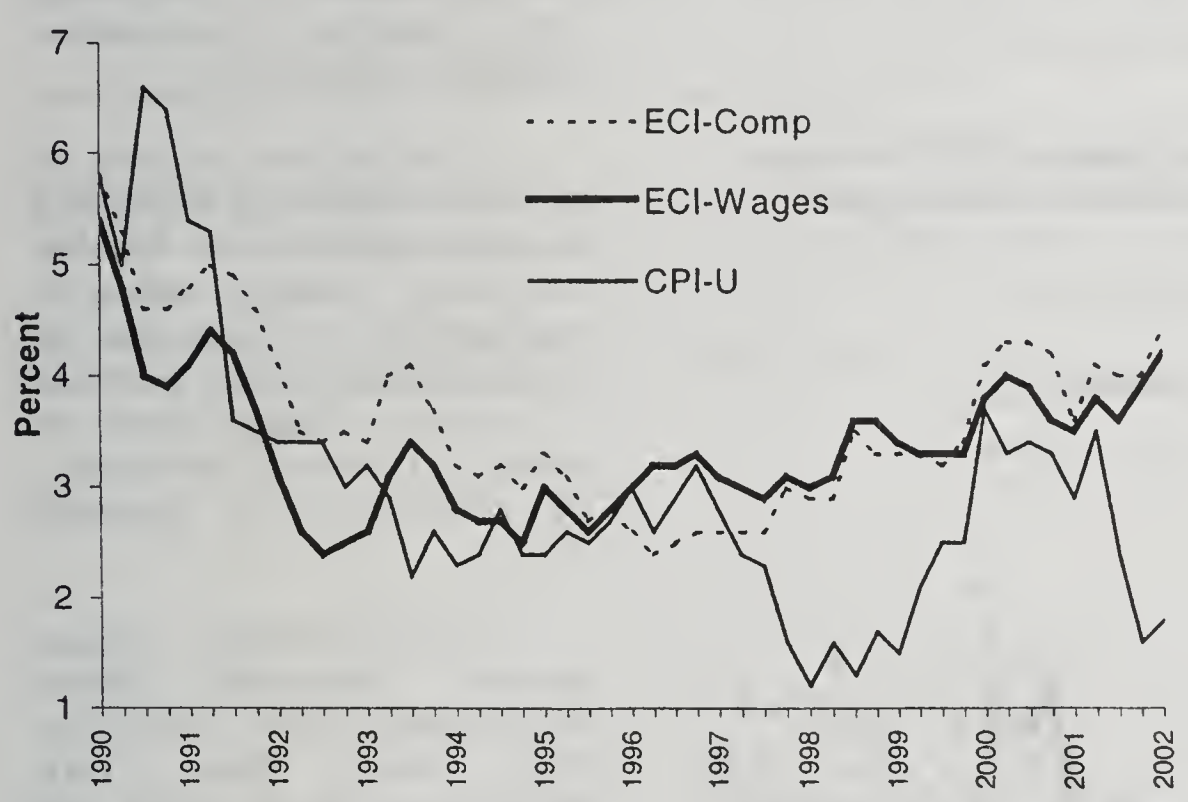
EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – MARCH 2002

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 4.4 percent over the year ended March 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that this was the largest over-the-year increase since December 1991. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 4.2 percent over the year, the fastest rate of growth since September 1991.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2002



Both ECI series continued to rise more rapidly than prices. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.8 percent since last March, 2.6 percentage points less than the increase in total compensation costs and 2.4 percentage points less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region.

The increase in the CPI-U for the Northeast has been lower than that for the ECI over the last five years. Since March 1997, the CPI-U has increased 11.8 percent compared with 19.7 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 19.2 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 3.9 percent in March 2002; during 2000 and 2001, the 12-month increases fell in a narrow band, ranging from 4.0 to 4.6 percent. Although the over-the-year increases for the U.S. and the Northeast have generally trended together over the last decade, during the last two years the 12-month increases in the Northeast region ranged from 3.6 to 4.3 percent. At 4.4 percent, the Northeast increase was both larger than those increases and contrasted with the moderation of the U.S. rate. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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The 4.4 percent 12-month increase for total compensation reported in the Northeast was the highest among the regions. The Midwest had a 4.1 percent increase, followed closely by the West with 4.0 percent. The South's 3.4 percent increase was the lowest among the regions. The pace of increase declined somewhat in both the South and West. Both of these areas recorded their smallest increases in two years, while the rate of growth increased slightly in the Northeast and Midwest.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1989-2002.

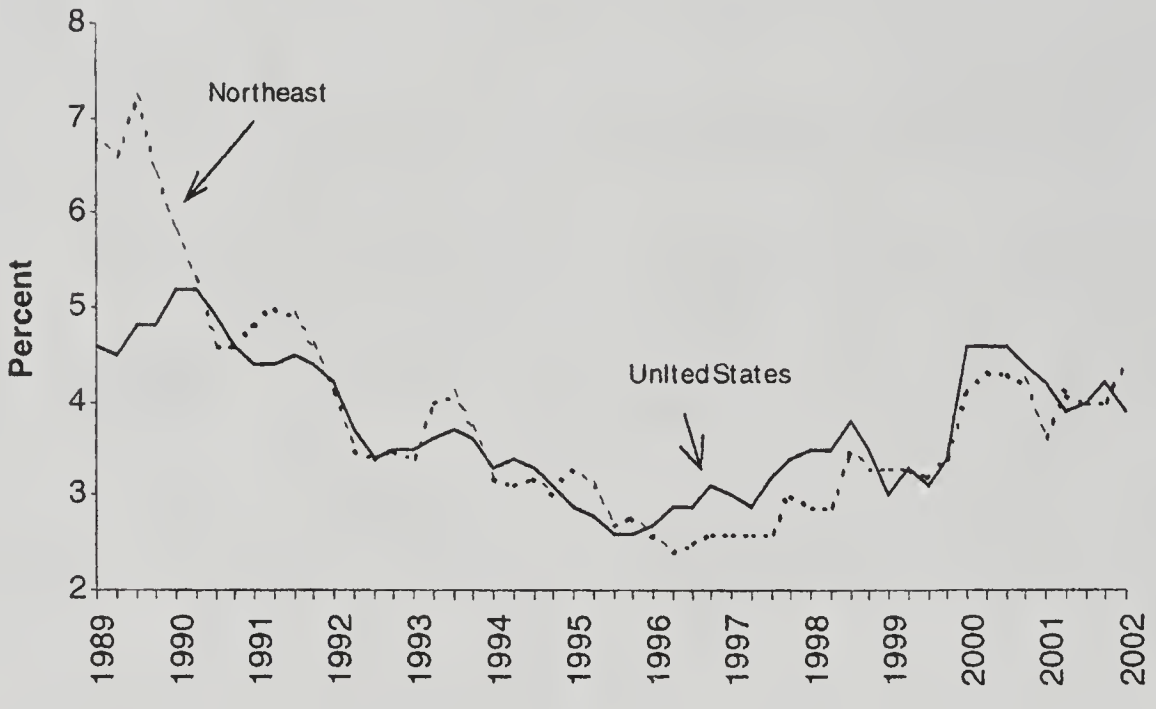
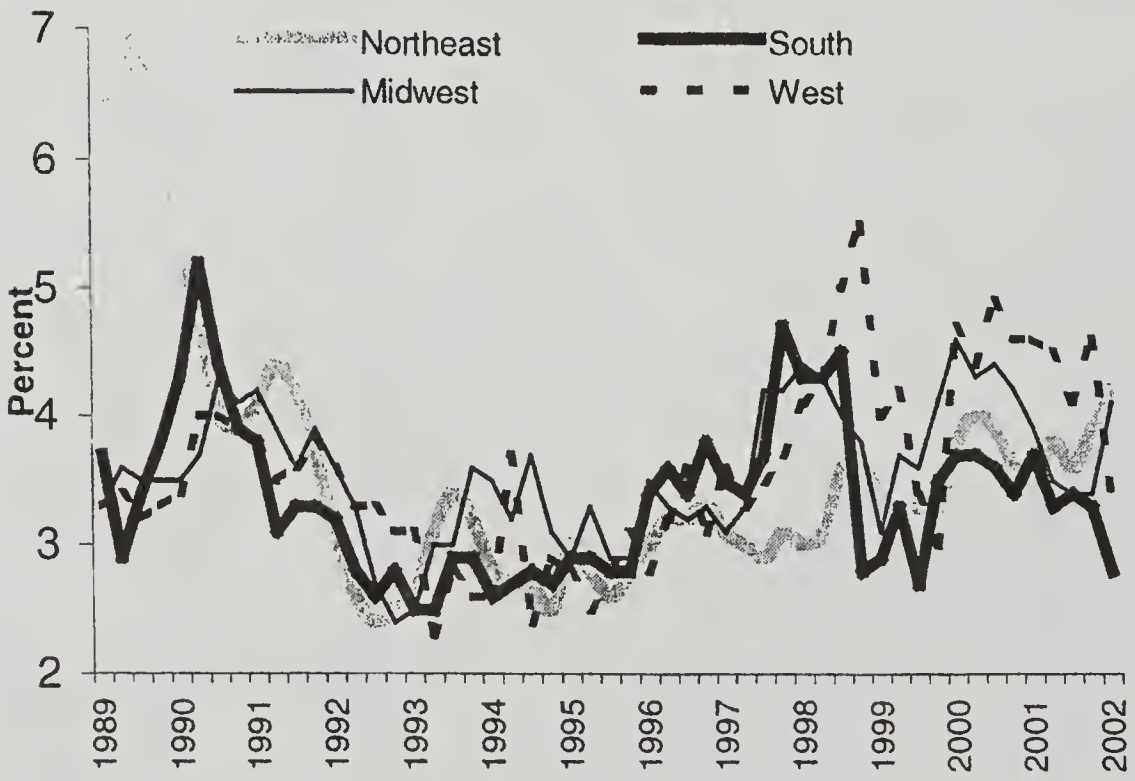


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1989-2002



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 4.8 percent between March 2001 and March 2002, slightly less than the 5.0 percent increase from March 2000 to March 2001.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.5 percent, the smallest over-the-year increase since December 1999, when it equaled that rate. The South had the lowest regional increase at 2.8 percent, followed by the West at 3.4 percent and the Midwest at 4.1 percent. The Northeast narrowly led the country with a wage gain of 4.2 percent. (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months, both the compensation costs index and the wages and salaries index increased 0.9 percent. Benefit costs increased 1.1 percent, following a 1.3 percent gain in December 2001.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use fore wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York Information Office, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. You may also use our automated fax-on-demand system at (212) 337-2412. Request code 4110 for the text of the release, 4115 for tables 1 through 4, 4120 for tables 5 through 7, 4125 for table 8, and 4190 for explanatory notes. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm. The ECI for June 2002 is scheduled to be released Thursday, July 25, 2002, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production, hiring and referral bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years to make it more representative and reduce respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1997-2001 were revised with the March 2002 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonally adjusted factors for 2002 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/ect/home.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8
-June	148.5	147.6	146.7	150.7	148.8	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.7
-September	149.9	149.3	147.6	152.2	150.8	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	1.3	4.6	4.3	4.1	5.0	5.2
-December	150.9	150.3	148.6	153.3	151.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.8	4.9
2001-March	153.0	151.6	151.1	154.8	154.3	1.4	0.9	1.7	1.0	1.6	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.0	5.0
-June	154.5	153.7	152.3	156.0	156.0	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.5	4.8
-September	155.9	155.2	153.5	157.4	157.6	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.5
-December	157.2	156.3	154.6	158.6	159.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	5.0
2002-March	158.9	158.3	156.2	161.1	160.4	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.6	0.6	3.9	4.4	3.4	4.1	4.0

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7
-June	145.4	143.7	144.6	147.1	146.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.4
-September	146.8	145.3	145.3	148.6	148.2	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.4	4.9
-December	147.7	146.0	146.3	149.6	149.2	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	3.9	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.6
2001-March	149.4	147.3	148.3	150.9	151.3	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.6
-June	150.9	149.2	149.3	152.3	152.9	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.9	1.1	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.5
-September	152.1	150.6	150.2	153.6	154.3	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	4.1
-December	153.3	151.7	151.2	154.7	156.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.8	3.9	3.3	3.4	4.6
2002-March	154.7	153.5	152.5	157.1	156.4	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.6	0.3	3.5	4.2	2.8	4.1	3.4

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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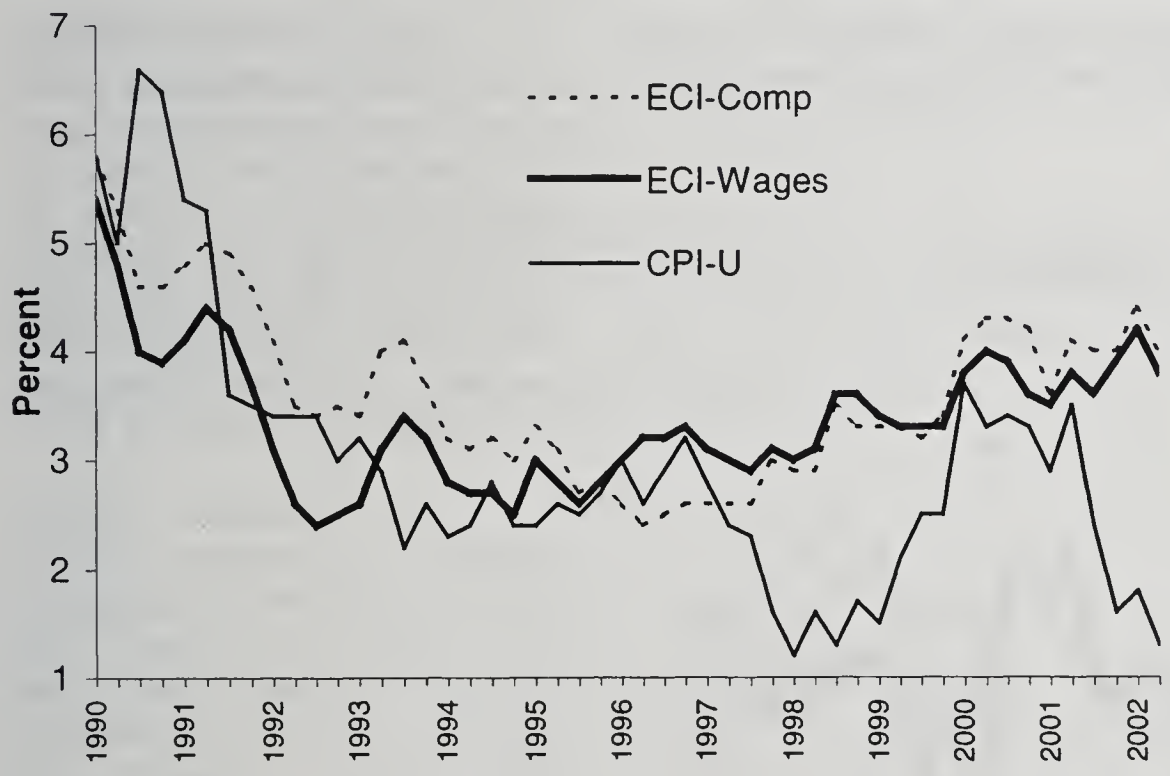
EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – JUNE 2002

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 4.0 percent over the year ended June 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. John L. Wieting, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that following the 4.4 percent increase reported in March, the latest advance was identical to those posted in September and December of 2001. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.8 percent over the year.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2002



Both ECI series continued to rise more rapidly than prices. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 1.3 percent since last June, 2.7 percentage points less than the increase in total compensation costs and 2.5 percentage points less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region.

The increase in the CPI-U for the Northeast has been lower than that for the ECI over the last five years. Since June 1997, the CPI-U has increased 12.5 percent compared with 20.1 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 19.3 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 4.0 percent in June 2002; since first quarter 2001, the 12-month increases fell in a very narrow band, ranging from 3.9 to 4.2 percent. Although the over-the-year increases for the U.S. and the Northeast have generally trended together over the last decade, since March 2001 the 12-month increases in the Northeast region ranged from 3.6 to 4.4 percent. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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The 3.5 percent 12-month increase for total compensation reported in the South was the lowest among the regions. The Northeast had a 4.0 percent increase, followed by the Midwest's 4.2 percent. The 4.4 percent increase reported in the West was the highest among the regions. The pace of increase rose slightly in the South and Midwest, with the West posting the largest increase. Only the Northeast's rate of increase slowed from March 2002.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1990-2002.

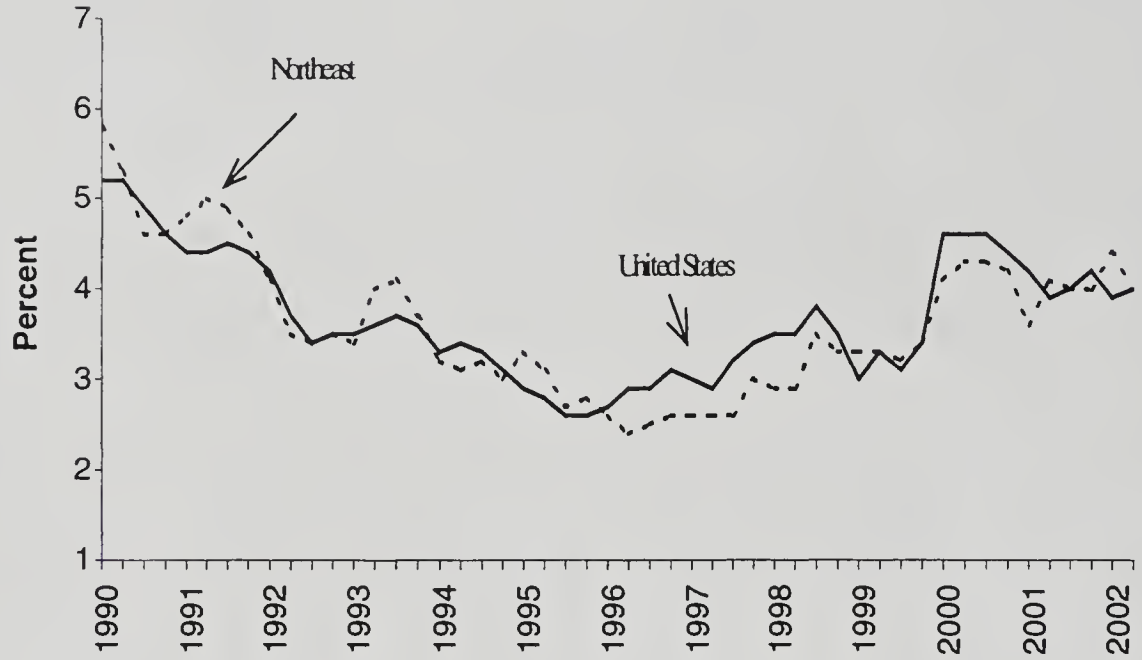
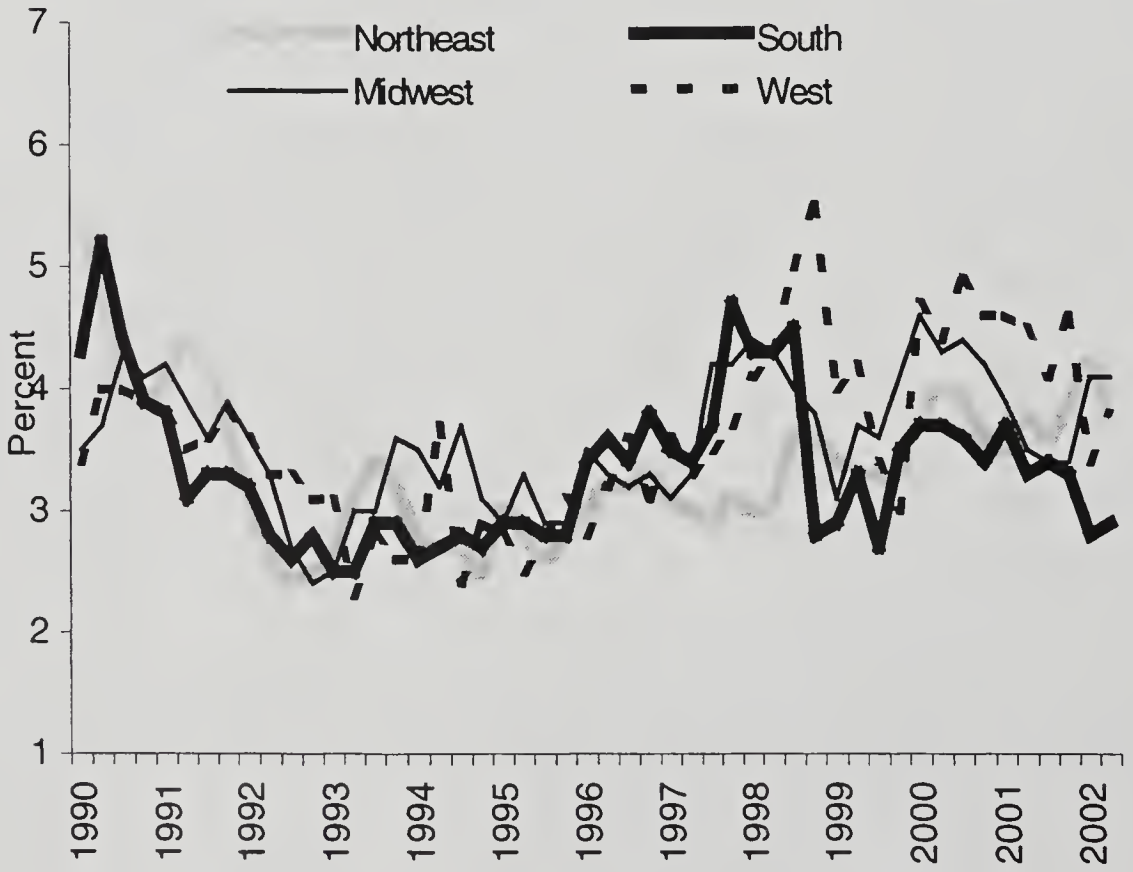


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1990-2002



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 5.1 percent between June 2001 and June 2002, slightly more than the 4.8 percent increase from June 2000 to June 2001.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.6 percent, up slightly from the 3.5 percent reported in March. The South had the lowest regional increase at 2.9 percent, followed by the Northeast and West at 3.8 percent and the Midwest at 4.1 percent. (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months, the compensation costs index increased 1.1 percent, while the wages and salaries index rose 1.0 percent. Benefit costs increased 1.4 percent, following a 1.1 percent gain in March 2002.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York Information Office, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. You may also use our automated fax-on-demand system at (212) 337-2412. Request code 4110 for the text of the release, 4115 for tables 1 through 4, 4120 for tables 5 through 7, 4125 for table 8, and 4190 for explanatory notes. Requests may be faxed to (212) 337-2532. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm. The ECI for September 2002 is scheduled to be released Thursday, October 31, 2002, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production, hiring and referral bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years to make it more representative and reduce respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1997-2001 were revised with the March 2002 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonally adjusted factors for 2002 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/ect/home.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8
-June	148.5	147.6	146.7	150.7	148.8	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.7
-September	149.9	149.3	147.6	152.2	150.8	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	1.3	4.6	4.3	4.1	5.0	5.2
-December	150.9	150.3	148.6	153.3	151.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.8	4.9
2001-March	153.0	151.6	151.1	154.8	154.3	1.4	0.9	1.7	1.0	1.6	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.0	5.0
-June	154.5	153.7	152.3	156.0	156.0	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.5	4.8
-September	155.9	155.2	153.5	157.4	157.6	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.5
-December	157.2	156.3	154.6	158.6	159.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	5.0
2002-March	158.9	158.3	156.2	161.1	160.4	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.6	0.6	3.9	4.4	3.4	4.1	4.0
-June	160.7	159.9	157.6	162.6	162.9	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.6	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.2	4.4

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7
-June	145.4	143.7	144.6	147.1	146.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.4
-September	146.8	145.3	145.3	148.6	148.2	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.4	4.9
-December	147.7	146.0	146.3	149.6	149.2	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	3.9	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.6
2001-March	149.4	147.3	148.3	150.9	151.3	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.6
-June	150.9	149.2	149.3	152.3	152.9	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.9	1.1	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.5
-September	152.1	150.6	150.2	153.6	154.3	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	4.1
-December	153.3	151.7	151.2	154.7	156.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.8	3.9	3.3	3.4	4.6
2002-March	154.7	153.5	152.5	157.1	156.4	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.6	0.3	3.5	4.2	2.8	4.1	3.4
-June	156.3	154.9	153.6	158.5	158.7	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.5	3.6	3.8	2.9	4.1	3.8

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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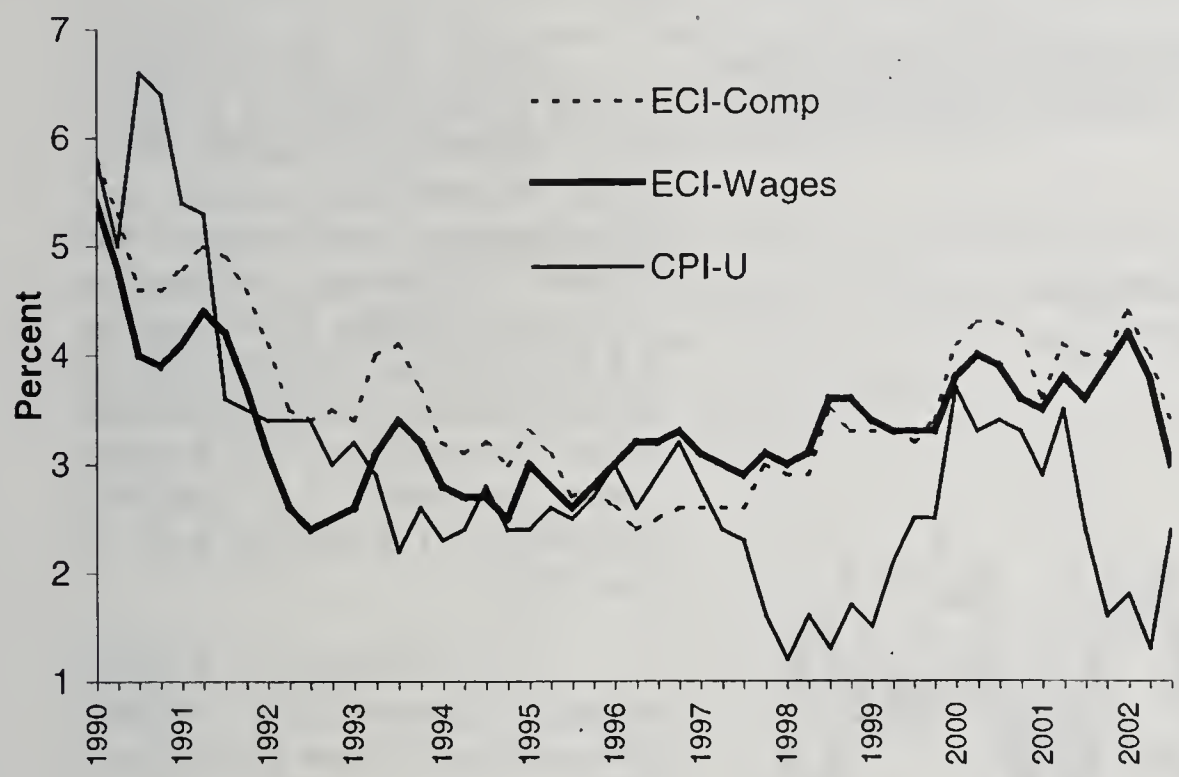
EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – SEPTEMBER 2002

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.4 percent over the year ended September 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Denis M. McSweeney, the Bureau's Regional Commissioner, noted that this was the lowest rate of increase since a similar advance in the fourth quarter of 1999. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 3.0 percent over the year.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2002



Both ECI series continued to rise more rapidly than prices. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.4 percent since last September, 1.0 percentage point less than the increase in total compensation costs and 0.6 percentage point less than the increase in wages and salaries for the region.

The increase in the CPI-U for the Northeast has been lower than that for the ECI over the last five years. Since September 1997, the CPI-U has increased 12.5 percent compared with 19.8 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 18.7 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 3.7 percent in September 2002—the lowest 12-month increase since the fourth quarter of 1999. The over-the-year increases for the U.S. and the Northeast have generally trended together over the last decade, but there has been more volatility over the last three quarters in the Northeast. Since March 2002, the 12-month increases in the Northeast region ranged from 3.4 to 4.4 percent, while the range for the U.S. was much narrower at 3.7 to 4.0 percent. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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While the rate of increase for total compensation was the slowest in the Northeast and the South 3.4 and 3.5 percent, respectively, the 3.9 percent increases reported in Midwest and the West resulted in the narrowest range in regional increases since December 1999. While the South's rate of increase was unchanged from June, the rate slowed in the other three regions.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1990-2002.

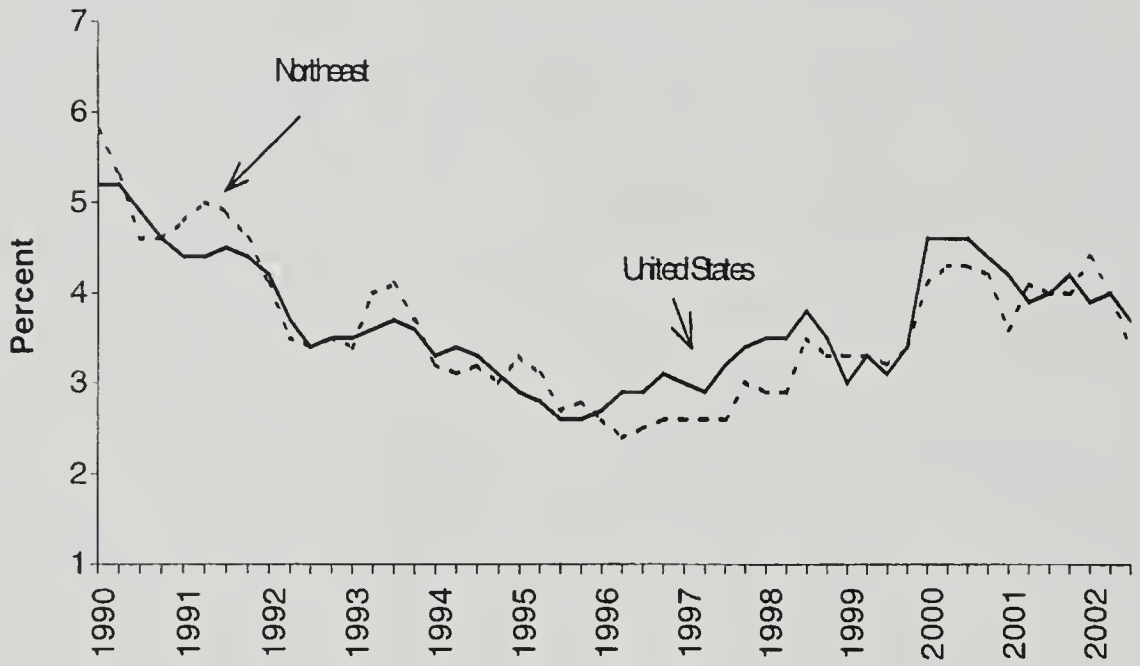
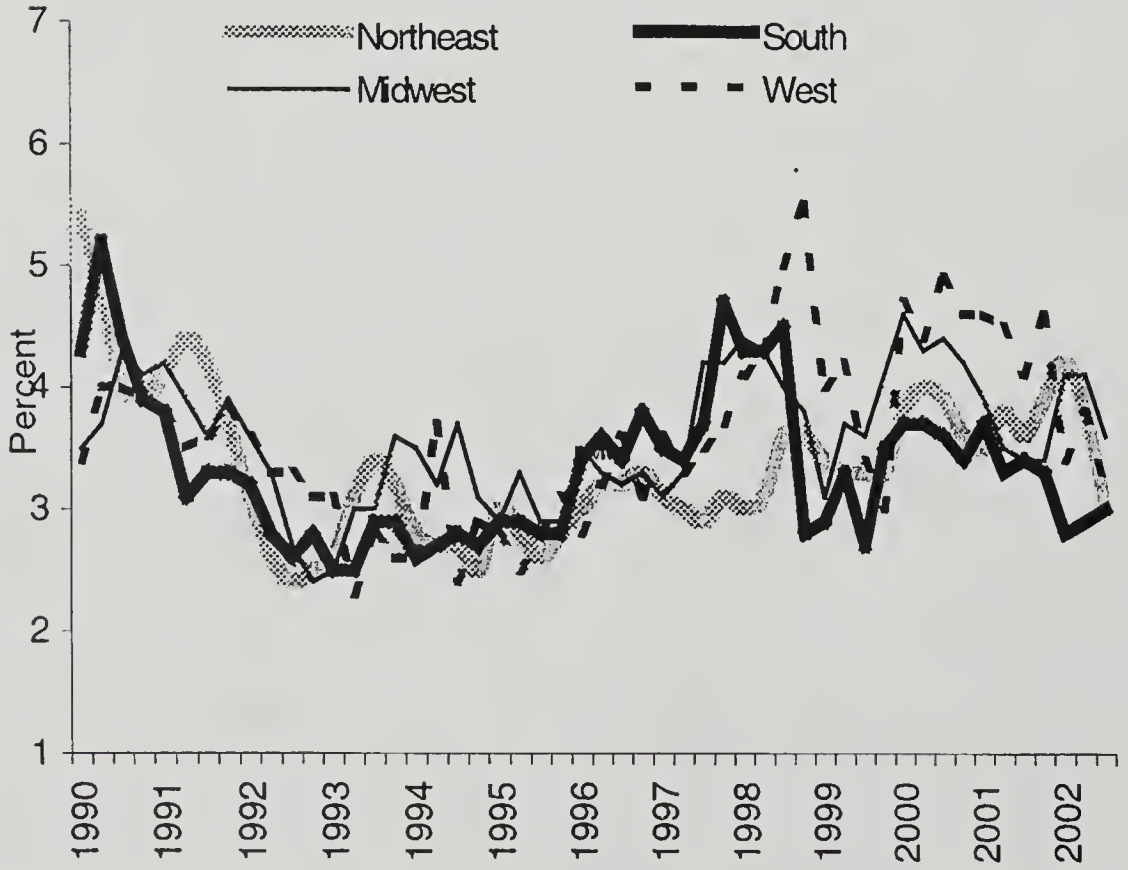


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1990-2002



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 4.8 percent between September 2001 and September 2002, slightly less than the 4.9 percent increase from September 2000 to September 2001.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 3.2 percent, down from 3.6 percent in June. The Northeast and the South had the lowest regional increases at 3.0 percent, followed by the West at 3.2 percent and the Midwest at 3.6 percent. (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months, the compensation costs index increased 0.6 percent, while the wages and salaries index was up 0.4 percent, the smallest rate of increase since a similar advance in the first quarter 1999. Benefit costs increased 1.0 percent, following a 1.4 percent gain in June 2002.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York Information Office, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. You may also use our automated fax-on-demand system at (212) 337-2412. Request code 4110 for the text of the release, 4115 for tables 1 through 4, 4120 for tables 5 through 7, 4125 for table 8, and 4190 for explanatory notes. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm. The ECI for December 2002 is scheduled to be released Thursday, January 30, 2003, at 8:30 a.m. (EST).

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production, hiring and referral bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years to make it more representative and reduce respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1997-2001 were revised with the March 2002 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonal adjustment factors for 2002 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/ect/home.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8
-June	148.5	147.6	146.7	150.7	148.8	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.7
-September	149.9	149.3	147.6	152.2	150.8	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	1.3	4.6	4.3	4.1	5.0	5.2
-December	150.9	150.3	148.6	153.3	151.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.8	4.9
2001-March	153.0	151.6	151.1	154.8	154.3	1.4	0.9	1.7	1.0	1.6	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.0	5.0
-June	154.5	153.7	152.3	156.0	156.0	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.5	4.8
-September	155.9	155.2	153.5	157.4	157.6	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.5
-December	157.2	156.3	154.6	158.6	159.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	5.0
2002-March	158.9	158.3	156.2	161.1	160.4	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.6	0.6	3.9	4.4	3.4	4.1	4.0
-June	160.7	159.9	157.6	162.6	162.9	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.6	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.2	4.4
-September	161.6	160.5	158.9	163.5	163.8	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.9	3.9

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7
-June	145.4	143.7	144.6	147.1	146.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.4
-September	146.8	145.3	145.3	148.6	148.2	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.4	4.9
-December	147.7	146.0	146.3	149.6	149.2	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	3.9	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.6
2001-March	149.4	147.3	148.3	150.9	151.3	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.6
-June	150.9	149.2	149.3	152.3	152.9	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.9	1.1	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.5
-September	152.1	150.6	150.2	153.6	154.3	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	4.1
-December	153.3	151.7	151.2	154.7	156.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.8	3.9	3.3	3.4	4.6
2002-March	154.7	153.5	152.5	157.1	156.4	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.6	0.3	3.5	4.2	2.8	4.1	3.4
-June	156.3	154.9	153.6	158.5	158.7	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.5	3.6	3.8	2.9	4.1	3.8
-September	157.0	155.1	154.7	159.2	159.3	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.4	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.2

[1] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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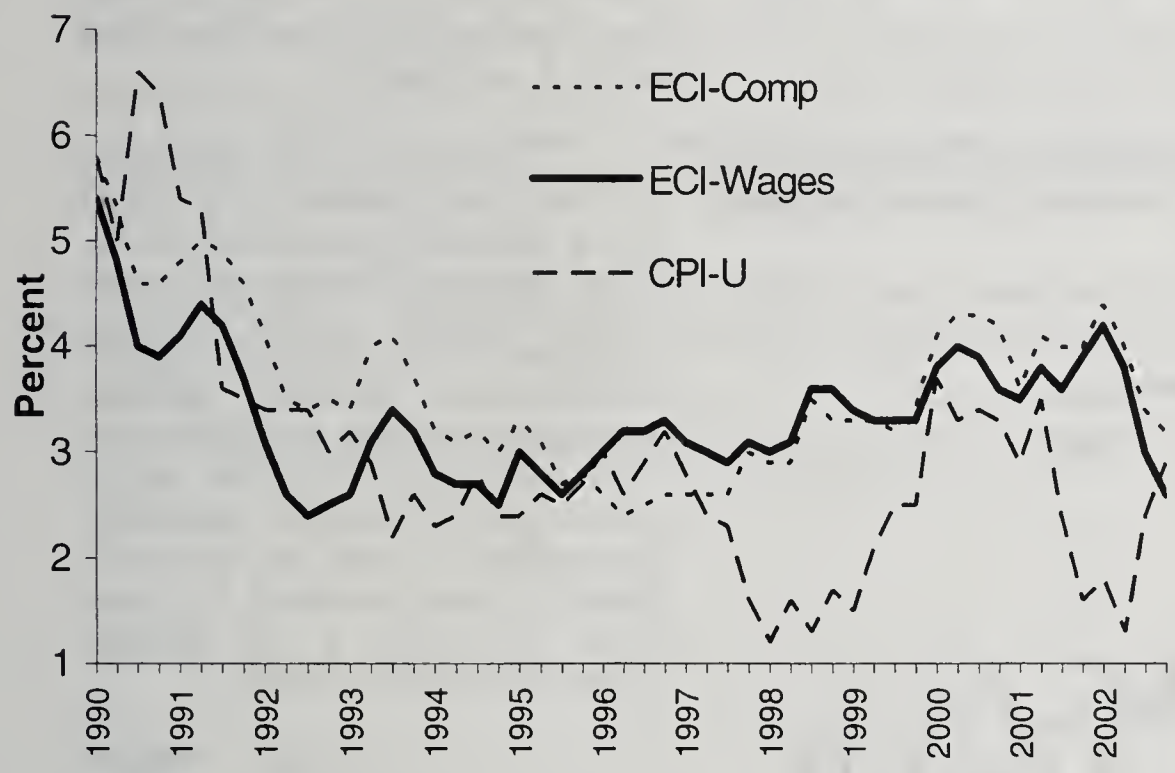
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX FOR THE NORTHEAST – DECEMBER 2002

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) for total compensation for private nonfarm workers in the Northeast Region increased 3.2 percent over the year ended December 2002, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Denis M. McSweeney, the Bureau's Regional Commissioner, noted that this was the smallest rate of increase since a similar advance in the third quarter of 1999. The ECI for wages and salaries, a component of the total index, was up 2.6 percent over the year—the smallest 12-month increase since a similar advance in September 1995.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in the Employment Cost Indexes for private industry workers, compensation and wages and salaries, and the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Northeast region, 1990-2002



December 2002 was the first 12-month period in over eight years that the increase in wages and salaries was lower than the rise in retail prices. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the Northeast rose 2.9 percent since last December, 0.3 percentage point more than the increase in wages and salaries for the region, and 0.3 percentage point less than the increase in total compensation. The last time retail prices outpaced total compensation was March 1997. (See Chart 1.)

The increase in the CPI-U for the Northeast has been lower than that for the ECI over the last five years. Since December 1997, the CPI-U has increased 12.6 percent compared with 19.5 percent for the ECI for total compensation and 18.3 percent for wages and salaries.

Trends in Compensation Costs

The U.S. rate of increase in overall compensation for private industry workers was 3.2 percent in December 2002—the smallest 12-month increase since the third quarter of 1999. The over-the-year increases for the U.S. and the Northeast have generally trended together over the last decade, but there has been more volatility over the last four quarters in the Northeast. Since March 2002, the 12-month increases in the Northeast region ranged from 3.2 to 4.4 percent, while the range for the U.S. was 3.2 to 4.0 percent. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

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The rate of increase for total compensation slowed in all four regions this quarter. Increases in compensation costs ranged from 2.8 percent in the South to 3.8 percent in the Midwest for the year ended December 2002. Compensation costs rose 3.2 percent in the Northeast and 3.5 percent in the West.

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for compensation, private industry workers, U.S. and Northeast census region, 1990-2002

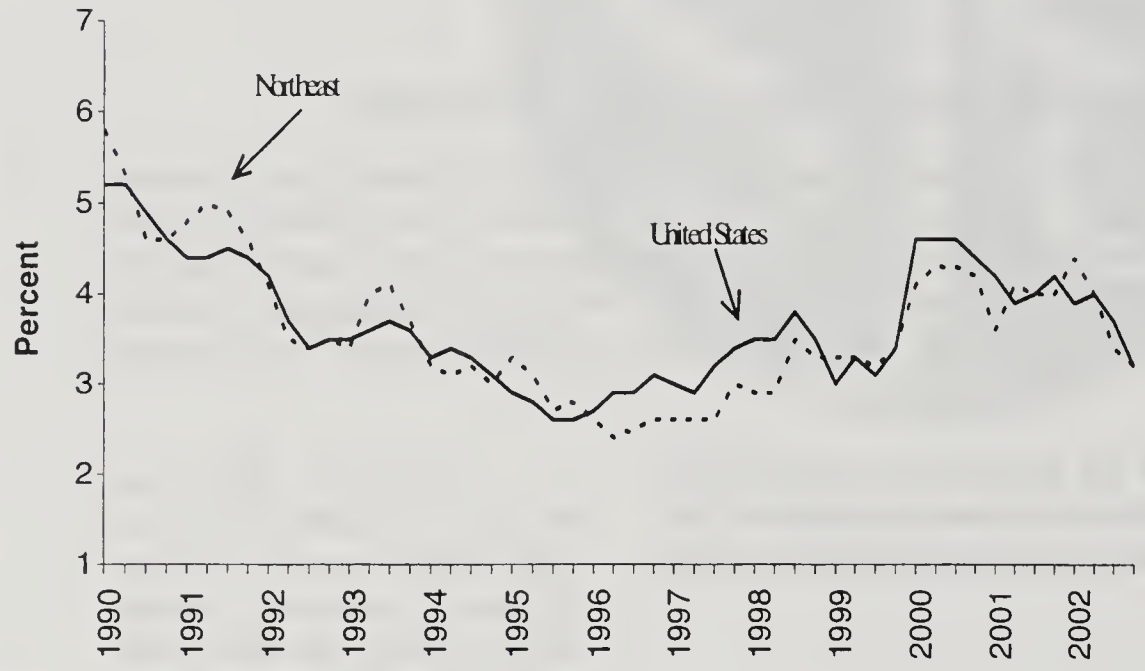
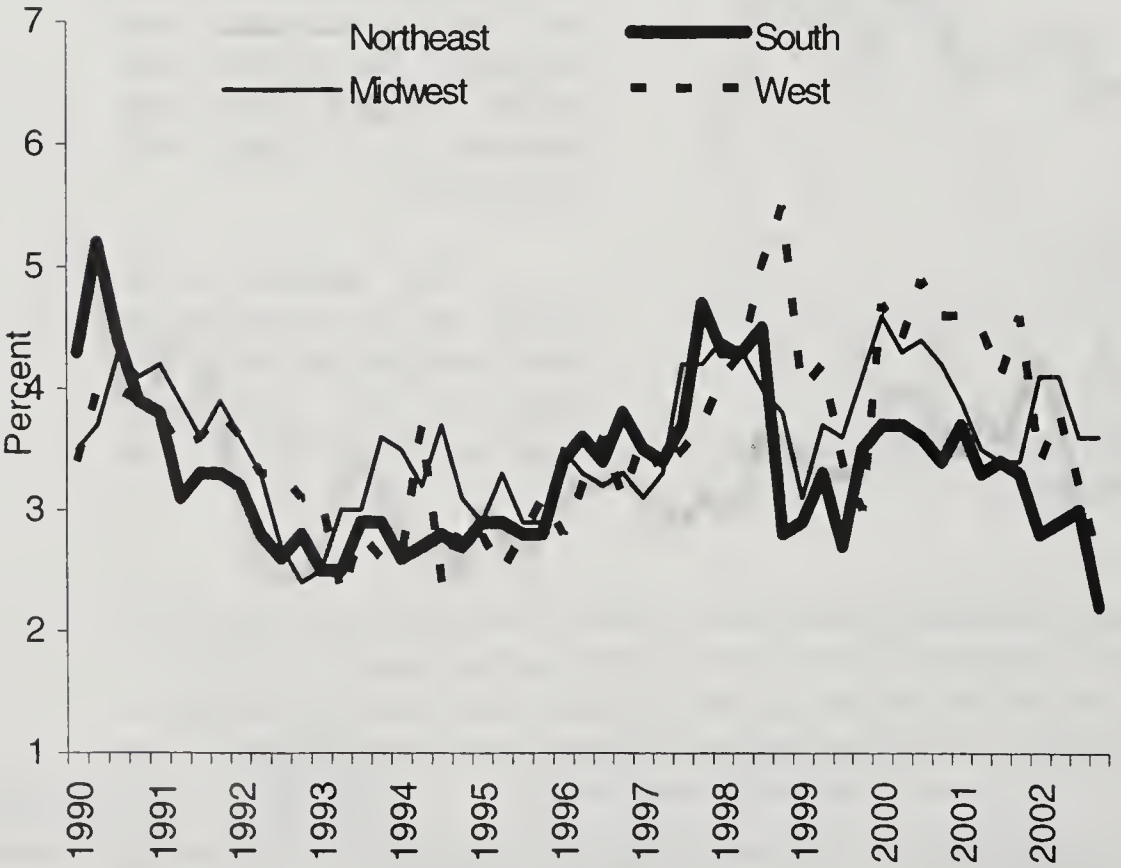


Chart 3. Over-the-year percent change in ECI for wages and salaries, private industry workers, census regions, 1990-2002



Components of Compensation Costs

Total compensation consists of wages and salaries along with employee benefits. Throughout the U.S., benefit costs increased 4.7 percent between December 2001 and December 2002, less than the 5.1 percent increase from December 2000 to December 2001.

The 12-month advance in wages and salaries in the U.S. was 2.7 percent, down from 3.2 percent in September. Among the four regions, increases in wages and salaries ranged from 2.2 percent in the South to 3.6 percent in the Midwest for the year ended 2002. Wages and salaries rose 2.6 percent in both the Northeast and the West. (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Data are also available for the United States as a whole on a seasonally adjusted basis. Over the last three months, the compensation costs index increased 0.7 percent, nearly identical to the 0.6 percent increase recorded in September. The wages and salaries index was up 0.4 percent, matching September's rate of increase. Benefit costs increased 1.2 percent, following a 1.0 percent gain in September 2002.

The Northeast Region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Employment Cost Index measures changes over time in wages and salaries and in total compensation for a standard mix of labor services. It is available in index number form (June 1989=100) permitting expanded use for wage and salary administration.

In addition to these regional data, a comprehensive national report is available that provides data by industry, occupational group, union status, and all metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas combined. This report also presents data for both private and state and local government employees. The report on the Employment Cost Index and further technical information may be obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York Information Office, 201 Varick Street, Room 808, New York, NY 10014. You may also use our automated fax-on-demand system at (212) 337-2412. Request code 4110 for the text of the release, 4115 for tables 1 through 4, 4120 for tables 5 through 7, 4125 for table 8, and 4190 for explanatory notes. The release is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm. The ECI for March 2003 is scheduled to be released Tuesday, April 29, 2003, at 8:30 a.m. (EST).

TECHNICAL NOTE: The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The compensation series includes changes in wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits. The ECI wage and salary series is limited to changes in wage and salary rates, defined as straight-time average hourly earnings. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime, work on weekends and holidays, and shift differentials. Production bonuses, incentive earnings, commission payments, and cost-of-living adjustments are included in straight-time earnings, whereas nonproduction bonuses (such as Christmas or year-end bonuses) are excluded. Also excluded are such items as payments-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

Since the March 1995 news release, ECI estimates are based on 1990 counts of occupational employment by industry, rather than on 1980 employment counts. The ECI sample is rotated over approximately five years to make it more representative and reduce respondent burden. The sample is replaced on a cross-area, cross-industry basis.

Seasonally adjusted indexes for 1997-2001 were revised with the March 2002 estimates to reflect updated seasonal factors. New seasonally adjusted factors for 2002 and revised seasonally adjusted indexes for the past five years are available on the Internet at http://www.bls.gov/ect/home.htm or upon request.

Table 1. Employment Cost Index for total compensation[1], private industry workers[2], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	98.8	98.7	99.0	98.9	98.8	1.2	2.1	0.9	1.0	1.1	4.6	6.8	4.1	3.7	3.6
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.0	3.8
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	101.0	101.0	1.2	1.8	1.2	1.0	1.0	4.8	7.2	3.9	4.1	4.1
-December	102.3	102.9	102.2	101.9	101.8	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	4.8	6.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
1990-March	103.9	104.4	104.0	103.5	103.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.6
-June	105.2	105.3	105.7	104.8	104.5	1.3	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.2	5.2	5.3	5.7	4.8	4.5
-September	106.2	106.5	106.3	106.3	105.6	1.0	1.1	0.6	1.4	1.1	4.9	4.6	5.0	5.2	4.6
-December	107.0	107.6	106.9	107.1	106.3	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	5.1	4.4
1991-March	108.5	109.4	108.4	108.5	107.5	1.4	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.1	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.8	4.1
-June	109.8	110.6	109.8	109.7	108.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3	4.4	5.0	3.9	4.7	4.2
-September	111.0	111.7	110.7	111.2	110.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.0	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
-December	111.7	112.5	111.2	112.2	110.9	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.8	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.8	4.3
1992-March	113.1	113.9	112.5	113.8	111.9	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.9	4.1
-June	113.9	114.5	113.3	114.6	112.9	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.7	3.5	3.2	4.5	3.7
-September	114.8	115.5	114.1	115.3	114.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.6	1.1	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.7	3.7
-December	115.6	116.4	114.8	116.1	114.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.6
1993-March	117.1	117.8	116.2	117.9	116.2	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.1	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.8
-June	118.0	119.1	117.0	119.3	116.4	0.8	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.2	3.6	4.0	3.3	4.1	3.1
-September	119.1	120.2	118.1	120.1	117.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.2	3.7	4.1	3.5	4.2	3.2
-December	119.8	120.7	118.8	121.2	118.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.3	3.6	3.7	3.5	4.4	2.8
1994-March	121.0	121.6	120.0	122.8	119.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.1	3.3	3.2	3.3	4.2	2.8
-June	122.0	122.8	120.8	123.6	120.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.7	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.5
-September	123.0	124.0	121.8	124.6	121.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.7	3.0
-December	123.5	124.3	122.5	125.0	121.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.0
1995-March	124.5	125.6	123.7	125.8	122.6	0.8	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.7	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.4	2.7
-June	125.4	126.6	124.3	126.9	123.4	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.7	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.4
-September	126.2	127.4	125.2	127.7	123.9	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.1
-December	126.7	127.8	125.6	128.3	125.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.9	2.6	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.7
1996-March	127.9	128.9	127.0	129.5	125.9	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7
-June	129.0	129.7	127.8	130.7	127.3	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.1	2.9	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.2
-September	129.8	130.6	128.8	131.3	128.3	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.8	3.6
-December	130.6	131.1	129.7	132.1	128.9	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	3.1	2.6	3.3	3.0	3.1
1997-March	131.7	132.2	130.8	133.3	130.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.5
-June	132.8	133.1	131.5	134.7	131.4	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.2
-September	133.9	134.0	132.5	136.2	132.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	3.2	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.3
-December	135.1	135.0	134.6	136.9	133.4	0.9	0.7	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	3.0	3.8	3.6	3.5
1998-March	136.3	136.0	135.5	138.3	135.2	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.3	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.8
-June	137.5	137.0	136.4	139.6	136.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.0	3.5	2.9	3.7	3.6	4.0
-September	139.0	138.7	137.6	140.9	138.5	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.5
-December	139.8	139.5	138.1	141.4	140.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	3.5	3.3	2.6	3.3	4.9
1999-March	140.4	140.5	139.1	141.7	140.3	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.2	3.0	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.8
-June	142.0	141.5	140.7	143.6	142.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	2.9	4.0
-September	143.3	143.2	141.8	145.0	143.3	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.0	0.8	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.9	3.5
-December	144.6	144.3	143.0	146.3	144.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4
2000-March	146.8	146.3	145.0	148.9	147.0	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.8	1.6	4.6	4.1	4.2	5.1	4.8
-June	148.5	147.6	146.7	150.7	148.8	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.9	4.7
-September	149.9	149.3	147.6	152.2	150.8	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	1.3	4.6	4.3	4.1	5.0	5.2
-December	150.9	150.3	148.6	153.3	151.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.8	4.9
2001-March	153.0	151.6	151.1	154.8	154.3	1.4	0.9	1.7	1.0	1.6	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.0	5.0
-June	154.5	153.7	152.3	156.0	156.0	1.0	1.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.5	4.8
-September	155.9	155.2	153.5	157.4	157.6	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4	4.5
-December	157.2	156.3	154.6	158.6	159.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.1	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.5	5.0
2002-March	158.9	158.3	156.2	161.1	160.4	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.6	0.6	3.9	4.4	3.4	4.1	4.0
-June	160.7	159.9	157.6	162.6	162.9	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.6	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.2	4.4
-September	161.6	160.5	158.9	163.5	163.8	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.9	3.9
-December	162.3	161.3	159.0	164.6	165.0	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.7	0.7	3.2	3.2	2.8	3.8	3.5

[1] The index measures change in total compensation costs: wages, salaries, and employer costs for employee benefits.

[2] Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

Table 2. Employment Cost Index for wages and salaries only, private industry workers[1], United States and Census regions, 1989-2002, not seasonally adjusted

Month and year	Index (June 1989=100)					3-month percent change					12-month percent change				
	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West	U.S.	North-east	South	Mid-west	West
1989-March	99.0	98.7	99.2	99.1	99.1	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.2	6.5	3.7	3.3	3.3
-June	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	4.1	6.4	2.9	3.6	3.4
-September	101.2	101.8	101.2	100.8	100.8	1.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.8	4.3	7.0	3.4	3.5	3.2
-December	102.0	102.9	102.1	101.6	101.4	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.6	4.1	6.2	3.8	3.5	3.3
1990-March	103.2	104.0	103.5	102.6	102.5	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.0	1.1	4.2	5.4	4.3	3.5	3.4
-June	104.5	104.8	105.2	103.7	104.0	1.3	0.8	1.6	1.1	1.5	4.5	4.8	5.2	3.7	4.0
-September	105.4	105.9	105.7	105.1	104.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.8	4.2	4.0	4.4	4.3	4.0
-December	106.1	106.9	106.1	105.8	105.4	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.6	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9
1991-March	107.3	108.3	107.4	106.9	106.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	4.2	3.8
-June	108.4	109.4	108.5	107.7	107.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.7	1.1	3.7	4.4	3.1	3.9	3.5
-September	109.3	110.3	109.2	108.9	108.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.9	3.7	4.2	3.3	3.6	3.6
-December	110.0	110.9	109.6	109.9	109.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
1992-March	110.9	111.7	110.8	110.7	110.2	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.6
-June	111.6	112.2	111.5	111.3	111.1	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.8	3.0	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.3
-September	112.2	113.0	112.0	111.8	112.2	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	2.7	2.4	2.6	2.7	3.3
-December	112.9	113.7	112.7	112.5	112.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	2.6	2.5	2.8	2.4	3.1
1993-March	113.9	114.6	113.6	113.5	113.6	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	3.1
-June	114.6	115.7	114.3	114.6	113.7	0.6	1.0	0.6	1.0	0.1	2.7	3.1	2.5	3.0	2.3
-September	115.7	116.8	115.3	115.2	115.3	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.5	1.4	3.1	3.4	2.9	3.0	2.8
-December	116.4	117.3	116.0	116.5	115.7	0.6	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.6	2.6
1994-March	117.2	117.8	116.6	117.5	116.6	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.6
-June	118.1	118.8	117.4	118.3	117.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.1	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.7
-September	119.1	120.0	118.5	119.5	118.1	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.2	2.9	2.7	2.8	3.7	2.4
-December	119.7	120.2	119.1	120.1	119.0	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	3.1	2.9
1995-March	120.6	121.3	120.0	120.9	119.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
-June	121.5	122.1	120.8	122.2	120.9	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.5
-September	122.4	123.1	121.8	123.0	121.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.4	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8
-December	123.1	123.6	122.4	123.6	122.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1
1996-March	124.4	124.9	124.1	125.1	123.3	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.2	0.5	3.2	3.0	3.4	3.5	2.8
-June	125.6	126.0	125.1	126.2	124.8	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.2	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.2
-September	126.5	127.0	126.0	126.9	125.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.6
-December	127.3	127.7	127.0	127.7	126.5	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.1
1997-March	128.6	128.8	128.5	129.0	127.7	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9	3.4	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.6
-June	129.7	129.8	129.4	130.4	128.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.9	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.3	3.3
-September	131.0	130.7	130.6	132.2	130.2	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.0	3.6	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.5
-December	132.3	131.6	133.0	133.0	131.2	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.6	0.8	3.9	3.1	4.7	4.2	3.7
1998-March	133.7	132.6	134.0	134.7	132.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	4.0	3.0	4.3	4.4	4.1
-June	134.9	133.8	134.9	136.0	134.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.2	4.0	3.1	4.3	4.3	4.3
-September	136.6	135.4	136.5	137.5	136.7	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.6	4.3	3.6	4.5	4.0	5.0
-December	137.4	136.4	136.7	138.0	138.4	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.6	2.8	3.8	5.5
1999-March	138.1	137.1	137.9	138.9	138.2	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	-0.1	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.1	4.0
-June	139.7	138.2	139.4	141.0	140.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.5	1.4	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2
-September	141.0	139.9	140.2	142.4	141.3	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	3.2	3.3	2.7	3.6	3.4
-December	142.2	140.9	141.5	143.6	142.6	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5	3.3	3.5	4.1	3.0
2000-March	143.9	142.3	143.0	145.3	144.7	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.5	4.2	3.8	3.7	4.6	4.7
-June	145.4	143.7	144.6	147.1	146.3	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.4
-September	146.8	145.3	145.3	148.6	148.2	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.3	4.1	3.9	3.6	4.4	4.9
-December	147.7	146.0	146.3	149.6	149.2	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	3.9	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.6
2001-March	149.4	147.3	148.3	150.9	151.3	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.4	3.8	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.6
-June	150.9	149.2	149.3	152.3	152.9	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.9	1.1	3.8	3.8	3.3	3.5	4.5
-September	152.1	150.6	150.2	153.6	154.3	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	4.1
-December	153.3	151.7	151.2	154.7	156.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	3.8	3.9	3.3	3.4	4.6
2002-March	154.7	153.5	152.5	157.1	156.4	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.6	0.3	3.5	4.2	2.8	4.1	3.4
-June	156.3	154.9	153.6	158.5	158.7	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.5	3.6	3.8	2.9	4.1	3.8
-September	157.0	155.1	154.7	159.2	159.3	0.4	0.1	0.7	0.4	0.4	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.2
-December	157.5	155.7	154.6	160.2	160.1	0.3	0.4	-0.1	0.6	0.5	2.7	2.6	2.2	3.6	2.6

[1]Excludes self-employed, unpaid family members and private household employees.

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